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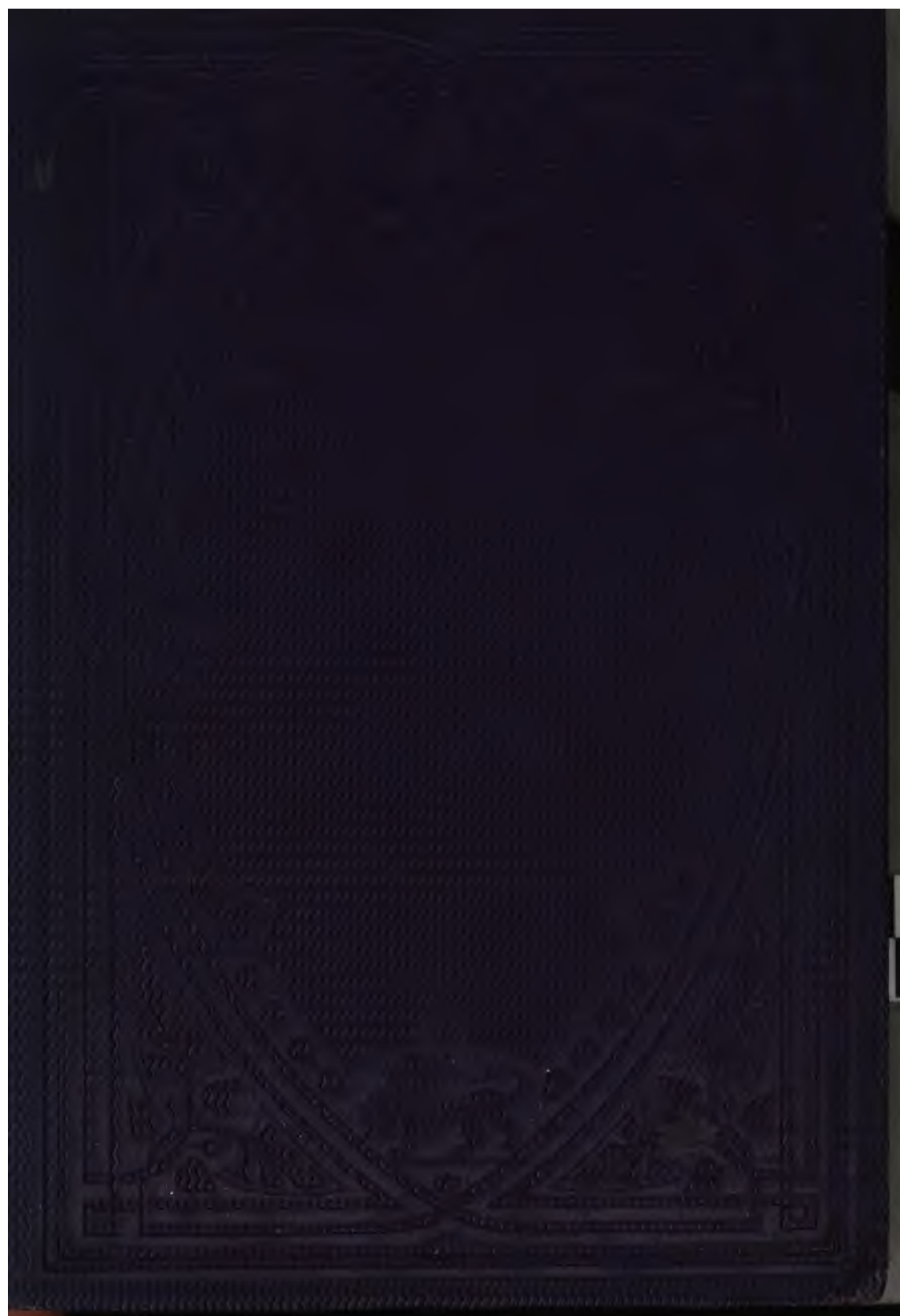
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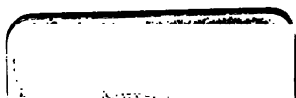
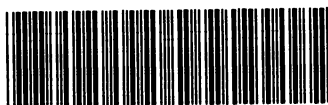
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A R T A N D N A T U R E

UNDER AN ITALIAN SKY.





Engraved by J. H. St. John

Engraved by J. H. St. John

VENICE—PIAZZA SAN MARCO. Page 290.



ART AND NATURE

UNDER AN ITALIAN SKY.

BY M. J. M. D.

"Fair Italy!
Thou art the garden of the world, the home
Of all Art yields, and Nature can decree;
Even in thy desert, what is like to thee?
Thy very weeds are beautiful, thy waste
More rich than other climes' fertility;
Thy wreck a glory, and thy ruin graceful
With an immaculate charm which cannot be defaced."
BYRON.

LONDON: THOMAS NELSON AND SONS.

EDINBURGH AND NEW YORK.

MDCCCLX.



TO
THE DUCHESS OF HAMILTON
THIS VOLUME
IS DEDICATED AS A TRIBUTE OF AFFECTION
BY M. J. M. D.

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ART AND NATURE

UNDER AN ITALIAN SKY.

INTRODUCTION.

ARIOUS motives combine to make me wish to keep something like a Journal during our present tour. It is always a peculiar pleasure to me to possess a memorial of the past, especially if that past has been marked by change of scene, or the calling forth of new feelings; but to be able thereby to recall vividly those scenes and feelings, so as to share them with those who have either experienced or can sympathize with them, makes such a record more valuable still. The painful part of leaving England and our own quiet home just now, is the consequent separation from our dear child, thankful though we are that she will be most kindly and tenderly cared for. Yet the idea, that if it please God to spare her, that dear child may, in after years, read the record of these days, will, I feel, add much to the enjoyment of employing my spare moments of rest

or leisure in a way that may hereafter contribute to her pleasure or instruction.

We embarked at Blackwall in the steamer for Antwerp—September 1845. The “Soho” seems a noble vessel, and is fitted up so as to secure as much of comfort for her passengers as usually falls to the lot of mortals in such a conveyance, which, however, I must confess, so far as my personal experience extends, is not saying much. Having secured a comfortable seat on deck, I amused myself, as we glided down the river, with the scene of bustle, so striking and bewildering to any one who passes for the first time through that world of shipping in the Thames. One’s fellow-passengers, too, come in for some share of interest on such occasions, and of criticism also, which doubtless is generally mutual. Near me sat a good-natured and somewhat portly dame, with a pleasing-looking daughter. The former amused me considerably: her remarks were precisely what one so often meets with in books. She was one of those people who bear that unmistakable mark of having *risen* in the world, viz., an evident anxiety to impress you with the opposite. She took care to leave no doubt as to her being quite rich and able to do as she liked, while the allusions to “her house,” “her carriage,” “her servants,” &c., were exactly the kind of thing Miss Edgeworth and other writers have so often depicted. Among other pieces of information she gave me to understand that she had been “a great traveller,” though it very shortly appeared that she had never before left England. This worthy individual was nevertheless both good-natured and kind. The daughter, a happy, joyous-looking girl, entered with all her heart into every novelty of this her first expedition—having, as her mother informed me, just left school. *Le Père*, a thorough John Bull, according to my ideas of that generic personage—rather coarse and blunt,

but withal very kindly. A young married couple on their wedding tour; a brother and sister; a young lady, with her French maid in close attendance upon her: these were our principal *compagnons de voyage*, if I except a most uncompanionable-looking lady of imposing stature, who, if she did not look down upon, at least took no other notice of any one. The usual accompaniments of a rough sea and head wind, which, as every one will allow, are more personally interesting in experience than in detail, made up the history of our twenty hours' passage from Blackwall to the mouth of the Scheldt, where, next morning, we came on deck to gaze with some curiosity on the first foreign habitations, albeit these constituted only the poor little town of Flushing. After some five or six weary hours of toiling up the river, we beheld, at length, the venerable towers of Antwerp, which, from the flatness of the country, and the high banks which intersect it, have the appearance, at a distance, of being half-buried, or of growing up from the level plain on which they stand. As we swept round into the Quay of Antwerp, fatigued as I was, I could not but be amused at the scene of energetic confusion that speedily prevailed. The water being low, we could not approach any proper pier for landing, and some huge masses of floating timber had to be lashed together before we could leave the vessel. This, for aught I know, may be an inconvenience purposely left unremoved, to prevent passengers making their escape before the douaniers can come upon them. Speedily these worthies appeared on deck, and then confusion became worse confounded, and the bustle almost frantic. For myself, I waited quietly, knowing that my husband was getting our passports *viséd*, and that rushing to and fro, as some seemed doing, in a fever of excitement, would not expedite matters. Meanwhile, my long-cherished dread

of foreign custom-houses was not relieved by seeing the manner in which some of our companions fared ; yet I soon perceived that some of the officers were rougher than others, and fixing on an old man, I made friendly advances to him, civilly telling him we had nothing contraband, that I was much fatigued with the voyage, and unable to exert myself in re-packing my boxes if they should be pulled about. In short, I quite propitiated the aged official, who, lifting up my dresses most carefully, just peeped in : “ *Très-bien, très-bien, Mademoiselle, c’est fini ;* ” ordering all belonging to me to be locked and prepared for his mark. This grand crisis in a traveller’s fate being over so much more pleasantly than anticipated, we stepped right gladly upon foreign ground. On the way to the hotel we were at once struck with the great cleanliness of the town, as well as with its wide and well-paved streets ; nor did Antwerp sink in our estimation by our reception at the hotel. The “ *St. Antoine* ” is a most comfortable house, with an excellent table-d’hôte, where one meets with those desirable but seldom combined elements of the wayfarer’s entertainment—good dinner, good waiting, and a moderate charge.

Towards evening we sallied forth, to make the best of our short stay, and bent our steps to the *Eglise St. Jacques*. It is a fine old church. The rich carving and ornaments of the interior are exquisitely finished, and the lofty ceiling of pure white, spangled with gold stars, though peculiar, has a pleasing effect there. The great object is the tomb of Rubens, immediately behind the high altar. There is an inscription on the tomb, and above portraits of himself and a number of his relatives. The colouring is rich, and some of the faces are interesting. Placed above the picture is a figure in marble of the Virgin Mary, chosen and brought here by Rubens himself. There is a small oval picture by Vandyke, which I liked,

but no other struck me. On leaving St. Jacques, we went to the Cathedral, of which the good city is so justly proud. I never before saw anything like the exquisite stone carving of the spire: its tracery, on looking from below, seems to have the delicacy of the finest Brussels lace. The interior is imposing, and from its simple purity, united with its grandeur, the *coup d'œil* is very satisfying. The massive pillars stand alone and unencumbered, with nothing to mar the symmetry and beauty of their proportions.

But the great attraction of the interior we had yet to see, and this was readily confessed when the "Suisse de l'Eglise" drew aside the curtain which hangs before the great masterpiece of Rubens, "The Descent from the Cross." I was much affected as I gazed upon it. There is a more than human expression in the countenance of Jesus, and in that touching resignation which appears in every feature, and which the recent anguish of death has had no power to overcome! Yet with all this truthfulness of moral expression, death is indelibly engraven on every feature and on every limb! When I could look at the other parts of this glorious picture, the next object which riveted my attention was the lovely face of the Mother of Jesus. A mother's grief is imprinted upon that countenance, which is itself almost as pale as the lifeless form she beholds. But there is a subdued and holy calm also in the expression, such as one expects to find. The other two Marys have, each in a varied degree, the same look of sorrowful interest in the scene. Then, as if to show the artist's power, he has introduced a noble-looking Roman woman, with her babe in her arms, and the same sadness in her face. Still more remarkable is the expression given to an old withered crone, who is supposed to be there to perform the last offices for the dead: she stands still, as though

arrested in the very act of approaching him. One fancies some such feeling has dawned upon her as that which caused the Roman soldier to cry out, "Truly this was the Son of God." The next picture is Rubens's "Elevation of the Cross:" a very fine painting also, but inferior to the other. The "Ascension of Mary" is another of Rubens's *chef-d'œuvres*, called his "Bouquet;" but though some of the faces have great loveliness, the subject is repugnant to one's feelings. There are fine specimens of painting by Rubens's master, which we saw to great advantage, thanks to the intelligence of the "Suisse." Before we left the Cathedral we much enjoyed the fine effect of the organ pealing through that vast space and filling it with solemn sounds.

We returned to the hotel, and after a refreshing cup of *café au lait*, retired to rest. Next morning left by railway for Brussels. The railway carriages are very comfortable, and in every respect equal to our own. The country is quite flat, but pretty and cultivated and English-looking. The road traverses the village of Berchem, which was the headquarters of the French general Gérard during the famous siege of Antwerp. It is strange to fancy the peaceful gardens and orchards which now surround it, once the scene of bloodshed and all the horrors of war. Passed Mechlin or Malines, the celebrated lace manufactory; and, after seeing the old Palace Laeken, where Napoleon decided on his disastrous expedition to Moscow, we reached Brussels. The first view of Brussels is striking. The Boulevards give an air of gaiety to the city, and the houses seem well built and handsome. We drove to the "Hotel de Flandres," in the Place Royale; and, after speaking to a civil landlady, were shown to the pretty, cheerful room in which I am now writing, with a large window looking into the Grande Place.

The following morning visited the Cathedral. It is a massive pile of building, very rich, but without the elaborate elegance of Antwerp. Yet the scene on entering was very imposing. The windows of stained glass are beautiful; and the varied tints cast around had something like enchantment in their effect." On one side the sun shone brightly through, and the reflections of the brilliant colours on the pillars were like gems amidst the imaged leaves and flowers. A few yards farther on, and the chief colour from the next window was a blood-red. This cast a sunset radiance on the pure white marble, tinting now a group of kneeling figures, now a statue, and again bringing into light and life the old grey time-worn arches. The whole centre of the vast building was filled with people; but I could not look at the miserable tinsel figures of the Virgin and the infant Jesus before which they were kneeling! It was truly a painful sight.

The Rhine—the beautiful Rhine—is before us! We have stood beside its banks; and as I write at this moment, I have but to lift my eyes from the paper to behold it in all its glowing beauty. I have determined at least to write a few lines before again going out, in order, if possible, still more vividly to fix this scene in the page of memory. It is one such as I have not hitherto looked upon. A rich mellow tint is cast on the distant wood-clad hills, on the nearer, swelling meadow lands and studded villages, nestling calm and peaceful among vineyards and poplar groves, while the majestic river sweeps its onward course, making its waves a blessing as they pass! I fully appreciate at this moment that line in Byron's exquisite description of the Rhine,—

"There can be no farewell to scene like thine,
The mind is coloured by thy every hue."

And now having as it were traced a mental sketch in these

few words, I must return to where I last wrote, and notice some of the passing events of the last two days.

On leaving Brussels we took our places in the railway to Cologne. For a railway our progress was slow, and the heat and dust almost insufferable. The country to Liège is very uninteresting. At Louvain we caught a glimpse of the beautiful Hôtel de Ville, the architecture of the richest Gothic. After passing Liège the scenery becomes interesting. The town itself lies in a valley, with villas scattered on the sides of the hills, surrounded by orchards and gardens. The quantity of hops seems a characteristic here; each house has a large plantation attached of these graceful hanging northern vines. The line passes through the valley of the Vesdre, a *riant* champaign, with wooded slopes, winding streams, picturesque cottages, and little village churches, with tall spires, looking out from sheltered nooks. It is a rich and varied scene for a railway to pass through; and it was peculiarly refreshing, amidst the dust and heat and noise, to look out on these smiling homes. At Verviers we had to change carriages, and I shall not soon forget the scene of confusion which ensued. The whole thing is most wretchedly managed: a miserable little room, with one table, on which lay a few stale cakes and biscuits, was all the accommodation and relief for our heat, thirst, and weariness! Of course it was crammed, so there was no remaining in it. Outside was the alternative of a broiling sun, clouds of dust and tobacco, combined with the hissing of steam-engines, and men and women screaming German! Yet there we had to wait full half an hour before even the carriages were prepared. Then came such rushing and pushing, in the midst of which I was almost laid prostrate by the elbow of a huge German, with a beard like a wild beast.

The country continued extremely pretty, all of the same sunny character, with every now and then a glassy river, with wooded banks and shady pools. As the evening advanced it became cool and refreshing. One lady in the carriage was very agreeable, evidently a German, but speaking French well. We had a good deal of conversation on various subjects. Amongst other things I found she had lived a good deal at Mannheim, and knew dear M—— quite well. She, as well as several others whom I have met with, mentioned her in terms which delighted me, and which I longed for D—— to hear!

We reached Aix-la-Chapelle about seven. It is the first Prussian *search*, but as we were booked to Cologne we were not examined. We got to Cologne station soon after nine, and were agreeably surprised with the contrast between the Prussian and Belgian way of conducting matters. The servants civil—no bustle or confusion. The foreign arrangements in regard to railway luggage seem very good. We were all shown into a large room, with a railing round a space in the midst, into which all the trunks, bags, and boxes were brought. The number of your luggage-ticket, which has been put on each of your boxes at the station where you booked, is then called out by yourself, or given to a porter, and so in turn everything is infallibly deposited at the feet of its owner. I made friends with a very civil Prussian douanier on whom I practised the device so successful at Antwerp—and he most accommodately gesticulated and acquiesced in all I said; “Bah, c’est ça, bien, bien!” helped to get our things together, and giving us a ticket, declared us free; and so the second of these dreaded searches was over. I slipped a trifle into this man’s hand, but not till after all was over, therefore not by way of bribe, but in reward of his civility.

A capital omnibus took us to the Hôtel Germanie, close to the cathedral, our reason for choosing it. It is a large establishment, but without the little comforts of Antwerp and Brussels; however, we slept well, and found the beds very comfortable. In the morning, after breakfast, we proceeded to the grand object of interest here. Of any we have yet seen, this cathedral is perhaps the most difficult to describe; for while all must allow and admire its gorgeous architecture and magnificent internal decorations, I for one was unable to feel its beauty as I did that of the others already noticed. It is in an interesting state at present. After having remained almost a ruin for centuries, the King of Prussia has yearly contributed a large sum towards its restoration and completion. It is difficult to realize what the effect will be of the vast towers which are contemplated to carry out the original plan of the architect. Well may it be said that when finished it will be the "St. Peter's" of Gothic architecture. The choir is the only part finished: it is a very vision of splendour! The five painted windows in the north, executed in 1508, with their rich hues and quaint devices, are singularly beautiful. The great height, the double range of stupendous buttresses, and the brilliant colouring and gilding all around, produce a wondrous and dazzling effect upon the mind. Some very old paintings have recently been discovered; one of them in a side chapel bears the date of 1410. The colours are surprisingly vivid, and there is also a peculiar softness which is pleasing; but the total disregard of perspective in these earliest productions destroys, in a great measure, one's first appreciation of them.

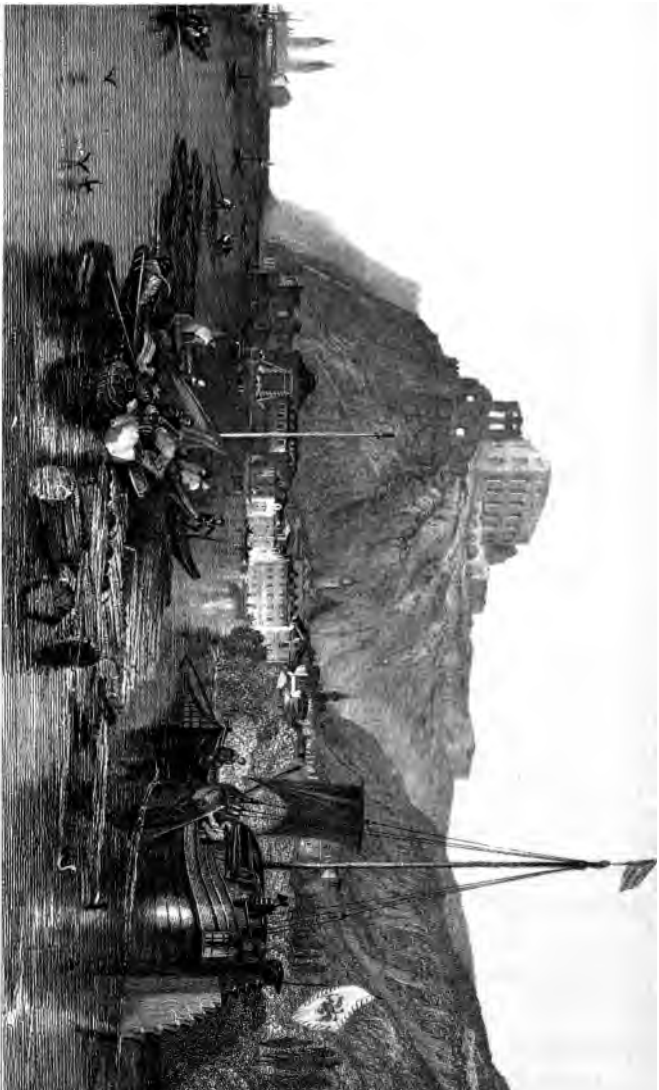
We next visited the "Shrine of the Three Kings of Cologne." The legend is, that these were the magi who brought presents to our Lord at Bethlehem. The shrine is a

large case, the greater part of solid silver gilt, the front of pure gold. The precious stones set in every part of it are enormous; and though many were taken out at the time of the French Revolution, and replaced with imitations, still enough remain to give an idea of the immense value of the shrine. It is still estimated to be worth six million francs, about £240,000. The contrast to all these splendid gems is ghastly when you are shown three skulls, said to have been those of "Gaspar," "Balthazar," and "Melchior," with golden crowns placed around them, and the names inscribed in rubies above each! Near this strange tomb is a slab of marble, covering the heart of "Mary of Medicis." In the sacristy we were shown a shrine of richly chased silver, with beautiful bas-reliefs, containing the bones of St. Engelbert, who founded the cathedral, and some exquisite carvings in ivory. A magnificent vase of rock crystal, ornamented with precious stones, and a sword of state of great antiquity, borne by the Electors of Cologne at the coronation of the emperors, are also kept here. In the afternoon started by railway for Bonn. The Royal Hotel here is a sumptuous mansion, with a noble staircase and *salon*. Our room I have already described as overlooking a scene of great loveliness. In the cool of the evening we wandered out; and first passing a part of the celebrated university, went to a garden, at one end of which is a kind of rampart, with parapets overlooking the river, and from thence we enjoyed again that most beautiful scene, clothed if possible in richer glories by the tints of the setting sun. Having visited the various objects of interest in the town itself, amongst others a noble bronze statue of Beethoven just erected close to the cathedral, we returned heartily tired after such a day. Sorry as we were to say farewell to Bonn, we had to do so next morning at seven,

when we stepped on board the steamer for Coblentz. The real Rhine scenery begins immediately on leaving Bonn. In a few minutes the castled crag of Drachenfels, "frowning o'er the wide and winding Rhine," was before us, and we were gazing on the scene so often pictured by fancy when reading tales connected with it.

"The frequent feudal towers
Through green leaves lift their walls of grey,
Looking o'er this vale of vintage bowers."

One which is particularly beautiful, and also interesting from its romantic story, is the "noble arch, in proud decay," of Rolandseck. It looks down on the Convent of Nonnenwerth, where Roland's betrothed bride was immured, whilst he lived a lonely hermit in the castle. The convent is now a hotel, but most picturesque in its situation and external appearance. The road becomes visible here as it winds along the banks. Its foundations were laid by the Romans, so that as early as A.D. 161, there was a road here. It would be tedious were I to describe in succession the lovely points of view which each moment revealed, but one or two I cannot pass without some notice. The situation of the castle of Rheineck is one of the most striking. On a perpendicular rock of great height, wooded from the base of the castle to the banks of the river, it stands in venerable grandeur. Just after passing it, is the last view of the Drachenfels, with its bold craggy outline in the blue distance—Rheineck in the bright foreground, and the graceful bend of the river as it sweeps away from you. There is not a more beautiful combination of picturesque objects on the whole of the Rhine than at this spot. "Andernach" is a quaint old town, remarkable for two singular quarries of stone; but after passing it there is no peculiar beauty in the scenery until near "Coblentz," where it seems to



THE HARBOR OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK.



burst afresh upon you. We had made acquaintance during the day with a nice English girl and her brother, who landed with us at Coblenz.

The Hôtel du Géant, from which I now write, had been recommended to both parties. It is on a gigantic scale certainly ; an excellent table-d'hôte, with a capital band playing whilst we dined. Our private room, however, is on the ground floor, so we have all the noise with none of the view of the river. In the cool of the evening we hired a fiacre, and drove to the Chartreuse. Passing through the town, and a part of the extensive fortifications, we reached the Forts of Constantine and Alexander. The size and height of these forts, situated on lofty rocks, are immense. The view, as we ascended the Chartreuse, became more and more magnificent. Ehrenbreitstein, the "Gibraltar of the Rhine," is the grandest feature. On the one side is the magnificent Rhine, flowing calmly on, and at your very feet the blue sparkling Moselle, which joins the Rhine at the base of the Chartreuse. How intensely I enjoyed that evening's drive !

We started next morning at nine o'clock, and were soon rapidly losing sight of Ehrenbreitstein, Stolzenfels, and the other beautiful features of the landscape around Coblenz. The character of the scenery here entirely changes. Instead of the sunny slopes, smiling meadows, and hanging vineyards which hitherto had given such softness of beauty to the banks of the river, the mountains close in upon it, and you appear to be suddenly transported into a narrow defile ; black precipitous rocks cast their shadows on the water, and frowning castles rear their sombre masses against the sky, carrying the mind back to feudal times and barbarous ages. One of the very finest scenes I have yet beheld was soon after leaving Braubach. There is a small town with a château at the

water's side. It stands at the foot of a high conical-shaped rock, and on this rock is the noble castle of Marksburg, the most perfect on the Rhine. It is the very *beau idéal* of an old castle, with its battlements and loopholes, and walls which seem as though nought but the ivy could scale them. Another sweep of the river brought into view a pretty village embosomed in trees. There are white cottages nestling beneath their shade, while a tall church spire shoots above them. Just as we were passing, the brightest sunshine glowed upon this village—upon its meadows stretching to the water's edge, and upon the wooded bank opposite; yet leaving the old castle in the deepest shade. At the same moment another gleam of light fell on the mountains behind the height of Marksburg, so that all was light save the dark old ruin itself, and the rugged rock on which it stands. It was one of those exquisite pictures, with a combination of everything to make it perfect, one sometimes for a moment meets with. The next place of much interest is St. Goar, overhung by the vast fortress of Rheinfels. It is of great extent, but quite in ruins. Here we had to part with our pleasant travelling-companions—the brother and sister already mentioned, who landed at St. Goar to see Rheinfels, and were then to go to Wiesbaden. The scenery continues most striking after leaving St. Goar, the rocks so wild and precipitous, closing in on both sides of the stream. One part has quite an awful character. On either hand are these black rocky barriers; beneath one bank is a dark whirlpool, and by the other a rapid, formed by the stream dashing over sunken rocks, and with a force increased by the narrowness of its bed. At the village of Caub is the spot where Blucher crossed the Rhine with his army on new year's night, 1814. It was on coming in sight of it that his soldiers burst forth into one simultane-

ous cry, "The Rhine! the Rhine!" and truly one does not wonder that this bounteous and beautiful river should have been through all ages such an object of reverence, as well as affection, to the Germans.

The castle of Rheinstein next attracted our notice. It stands on a projecting ledge of rock, with masses of rich wood behind and around it. This castle has been restored and beautifully fitted up as a modern residence. Opposite Rheinstein is the village of Assmanshausen, which gives its name to the famous Rhine wine. It is strange to see the vineyards reaching to the very tops of what might be thought inaccessible heights, on narrow ledges of rock, like successive terraces cut in the mountain. The vine-dressers are forced to scale the face of the rocks sometimes by ropes, and also to carry up a great part of the soil in baskets on their shoulders. The value of these grapes here is so great, that even those that drop are picked up with forks made for the purpose. They hang very long, the vintage not beginning until November. I got all my information on this subject, as well as about the places on the Rhine, from a remarkably pleasing young man who was escorting his mother, an old infirm lady. To her I happened to have rendered some little assistance, which seemed to gratify her son, who, in return, was extremely kind, explaining everything as we went along, and lending me sundry books and maps. We had a great deal of conversation after dinner, discussing various subjects. I remained sitting by the old lady whilst her son was walking about; so that I was not far from them when he returned with an old veteran officer, saying to his mother he had met with a friend of hers. To my surprise the old gentleman bent his knee before her, and kissing her hand said, "J'ai l'honneur de saluer Madame la Duchesse." In the course of conversation

some little time after, I happened to ask to whom belonged a magnificent palace we saw, "Ah! c'est à mon cousin le Prince de Nassau." After a little while he pointed out a building in the distance, saying, "C'est le palais de mon frère le Duc régnant de" I could not catch the name, from my ignorance of German. He announced to me that he was married to the most charming woman in the world, and that he loved all English people for her sake. There was much that was very pleasing about him: his manners frank, kindly, and unaffected. As we drew near Biberich, the château of the Duke of Nassau, he told me they were to land there, and as we had discovered that we had some mutual acquaintances, both he and his mother invited us in the kindest manner to come and see them. We had a most friendly parting. Madame la Duchesse overwhelmed us with good wishes, and M. le Prince G—— requested that we might exchange cards as a little remembrance of our meeting.

We reached Mayence about half-past six, and went immediately to the pleasant and quiet Hôtel de Hesse. In the evening walked out by moonlight, merely to breathe the fresh air, for it was too late to see anything of the town. The scenery above Mayence is monotonous and uninteresting; so I occupied myself on deck next morning writing letters till dinner-time. We had a quick passage, getting to Mannheim in about six hours. Leaving our luggage on landing at the station, we at once proceeded to find the palace. It was very interesting to me to see the place where D—— was married, and of which I have heard so much. It is a fine building, and though not distinguished for beauty of architecture, is imposing from its size and situation. The grounds and terraces are tastefully laid out, and there is a very fine distant view of the Vosges Mountains. I picked a rose from one of

the flower-beds, to keep as a memento of my having visited M——'s home ! We returned in time for the last train to Heidelberg, which we reached in about half-an-hour. After tea we wandered out, and crossed the beautiful bridge which spans the Neckar, immediately behind Heidelberg. The air was balmy and delicious, and as the dim twilight closed in, we were much struck with the scene on looking back. The wooded mountain which forms the fine background of the town, lay with an outline sharply defined against the clear sky, while the moon, which was just rising behind it, cast all in front into a gloom, rendered only the deeper by the many twinkling lights running in lines here and there along invisible streets. Immediately before us, placed upon the ends of the bridge, were tall sculptured figures, rising still and solemn into the silvery moonbeams which now fell on the upper portion of their forms. Beyond these was the massive arch of the gateway, through which we had passed beyond the walls, and the sombre roof of the old cathedral rising above it. We had come here in hope of getting a moonlight glimpse of the old castle, but could do nothing more than imagine where it might be, amid the dark shadows of the overhanging mountains. Our ramble, notwithstanding, was a very pleasant one.

We were early astir next morning, impatient to visit the magnificent castle. Such a carriage-road as that leading to it I never beheld. Looking from the bottom its steepness seems almost impracticable even for *bipeds*. How the two *quadrupeds* in our carriage contrived to scramble up I know not, being too nervous to open my eyes till the summit was reached. But I speedily had to confess that the object gained might reconcile one to much greater perils. We went all over this noble and most impressive ruin. The guide pointed

out the part built by Frederick IV., 1607, in the façade of which are ancestral statues of the reigning house of Bavaria. Then the building of Otho Henry, 1549-59, the finest part of the castle. Here the architecture is beautiful, and the sculpture very rich. The Octagon Tower lies in ponderous ruined masses, occasioned by the stroke of lightning, which indeed finally destroyed the castle in 1764. The date of the erection of the oldest part of the building is 1300, by the Elector Rudolph, whose statue is still to be seen. The English building and gate were both erected in 1612, for our Princess Elizabeth Stuart (daughter of James I., and grand-daughter, of course, of Mary Queen of Scots), by her husband, Elector Frederick. I remember when at Burley, reading a very interesting memoir of this Princess, and many parts of it were recalled as I marked the home she describes; particularly the triumphal arch leading to her own flower-garden, with its pillars twined with sculptured ivy leaves, which was built to commemorate her marriage. There seems to have been a good deal of ambition, as well as strength of character, in this Princess. When her husband hesitated to accept the Crown of Bohemia, her reply is said to have been—"Let me rather eat dry bread at the table of a king, than feast at that of an Elector," and she had literally to do so before she died.

There is part of a tower remaining, built by Elector Louis, of which the walls are twenty-two feet thick. It was destroyed in the last bombardment by the French, under Chamilly, whose brutality was atrocious. The famous tun, the largest wine butt in the world, is in the cellar below, but having no curiosity about this Bacchanalian marvel, we preferred wandering through the lovely woods and grounds. One view from the terrace, overhanging the river, was vividly impressed on my memory. The Neckar flows forth from its vine-clad

valley, to fertilize the **spreading** plain, which opens to the south. In the distance is the noble Rhine, with the spires of Mannheim, and the castle of Baden ; and even the spire of the cathedral at Strasbourg, it is said, may at times be seen. The whole landscape is bounded by the outline of the Vosges Mountains. The last moment we could spare was spent in re-viewing this rich and varied expanse, and then returning to the hotel, we left by railway for Strasbourg. Our passports were *viséd*, and our luggage examined on the German side of the Rhine at Kehl, and then crossing we found ourselves upon French ground, in tolerably comfortable quarters in the "Ville de Paris," Strasbourg.

During a stay of three days we had abundant time to admire the various objects of interest in the town. Chief among these is, of course, the cathedral ; its spire the loftiest in the world, and its painted windows I should suppose among the finest. Then the wonderful clock, with its complicated automata, that used to excite the imagination of our childhood, even in the pages of the old familiar school-book, was duly examined too. A beautiful monument erected by Louis xv., to the memory of Maréchal Saxe, is well placed in the nave of the church of St. Thomas, now used by a Protestant congregation. The noble figure of the Maréchal is the first object on which the eye fixes. In full armour, his head crowned with laurels, and his bâton in one hand, he is calmly descending the steps which lead to a tomb. A figure of death is holding open this tomb, whilst with the other hand he presents an hour-glass. The exalted expression with which he seems to return the ghastly look of the hideous form is admirable. At the feet of the Maréchal, on a lower step, is the figure of a beautiful woman representing France : with one arm raised she tries to prevent his stepping forward,

and with the other to avert the approach of the last enemy. In some things this reminded me of the monument to Lady Nightingale in Westminster Abbey, but I think there is more truth and beauty in this.

The country between Strasbourg and Basle, which we traversed by railway, is flat, but richly cultivated; large plantations of flax, with vineyards here and there, and picturesque villages, surrounded by groups of tall poplars. It rained heavily the latter part of the way, which obscured the distant views. Arrived at Basle we took up our abode at the magnificent hotel of "Les Trois Rois." This is a perfect establishment in every respect. We have a very pretty room with a balcony overhanging the Rhine, which washes the base of the walls below. Certainly the contrast between the gentle murmur of the river, and the trampling of horses, and jabbering of the men in that dingy court-yard into which our room looked at Strasbourg, is not a little delightful! Our first anxious care in the morning was to inquire about a veterinarian, under whose auspices we purpose henceforth to pursue our pilgrimage towards Italy. Having sent for the landlord to consult with him on a matter on which so much of our future comfort depended, he was able to recommend one so decidedly, that we thought ourselves fortunate in having such a promising specimen of a very exceptionable brotherhood put within our reach. Accordingly, we determined to engage him, and to his honour be it here recorded, that during the many weeks we travelled with him, never once had we cause to regret our choice of Ferdinando Pancresi, a native of Leghorn. There is not much to be visited in the way of "sights" in Basle. The ancient cloisters of the cathedral are interesting, and the views from the terrace in front fine. In the public museum we saw, I imagine, some of the

best of Holbein's pictures, certainly the best I have ever met with. He is not to me a pleasing painter, for even when his execution is good, and his colouring rich, his conception, and often his choice of subjects, are disagreeable. Almost the only one of his pictures that really interested me is a portrait of the first printer in Basle, and this I must own is as life-like a painting as art could produce. We looked with much interest on the autographs of Luther and Melancthon. Several letters from each, of considerable length, are here preserved.

Next morning we were off soon after eight. Our veturino's carriage was a comfortable easy barouche, large enough for convenience without being heavy, and he himself most attentive. A brilliant morning dawning auspiciously on our outset, our spirits rose to think that we were really on the way to Geneva and the Alps! The whole of this day's journey lay through picturesque and often highly romantic scenery. A succession of sweet secluded valleys, now closed in by rocky heights, fringed with wild wood to the top—now opening out in little meadows, green as emeralds, and enamelled with gay wild-flowers. Villages and churches now and then, as if planted for effect, in the very best points of the picture. The roads here, as indeed in most parts of Switzerland, are lined with apple and other fruit-trees, which, laden as they now were with their golden treasures, gave an air of richness and plenty to the scene. Some time after leaving the sweet village of Waldenburg, where we had made our first halt, we entered the romantic defile of Klus. The valley still lies in smiling loveliness beneath, but the rocks are darker and closer, and on one side rises a grey ruin, the castle of Falkenstein, pinnacled upon the rocky mountains, and appealing to imagination with its memories of the past, amid the gay loveliness of the present. Just as we were

emerging from the narrow defile where the country again opens in wider expanse, W—— exclaimed, "The Alps—the Alps!" and there they were, in the far distance—their glittering peaks shooting up distinct and clear into the soft evening air, a few delicate streaks of snowy clouds resting across their summits. Every one who has seen them will recollect the sensation peculiar to that moment in which the Alps first burst upon one's view. I believe no words could enable those who have not seen them to comprehend it. For myself, such was my deep experience of this, that on reaching Soleure that evening, I felt I was closing an eventful day of my pilgrimage.

The country we passed through next day was richly wooded and cultivated, but not particularly striking till close upon Berne. A fine avenue of trees skirts the road for two or three miles, and then you reach a long and well-managed descent to this most picturesque city. The river Aar flows through a deep ravine, with very precipitous sides; and on the top of a promontory, formed by a sudden bend in its course, the city stands. A lofty bridge has been thrown across the bed of the river. We drove to a nice quiet inn, "La Couronne," whose landlord was well known to our vetturino.

Berne has a history full of stirring incident both past and recent, which it is interesting to recall on the spot, but it has little for the traveller to visit. The cathedral is by no means beautiful in itself, but the view from the platform around it is grand indeed. The valley of the Aar winding at your feet—the rapid rush of the river itself, its waters of that peculiar pale green tinge which shows their origin to be among the Alpine snows; then, far above the rocky hills which close the city round, the snowy chain of Alps soaring into the sky.

We resumed our journey in the afternoon, reaching Fribourg about half-past seven—too dark to distinguish much of

that wonderful work of art, the Suspension Bridge, which leads into the town. The darkness, however, occasioned a peculiar effect in crossing it. This immense bridge spans the valley at a height of more than two hundred feet, and by an unbroken stretch of nine hundred. Part of the town lies in this valley, and as the stars were twinkling over head in the sky, and the lights below like other stars shining from beneath, but for the crack of Ferdinando's whip, and other equally terrestrial accompaniments, we might have fancied ourselves moving among the spheres! Next morning showed this wondrous bridge in another strange aspect. Standing on the terrace from which it springs, the sweeping curve was lost to the sight in a dense fog about half way across the valley, thus hiding its seemingly interminable length in distant space. The peculiarity which distinguishes this beautiful work of art from its no less beautiful rival, the Menai Bridge, is not only its greater length and height, but also its construction. The chains which support the latter are composed of solid bars of iron, while in the former these are constructed of bundles of wires laid lengthways and bound together: which, upon mechanical principles, secures the greatest amount of strength, let the initiated determine.

This day's route, characterized throughout by a succession of beautiful scenery, brought us in the afternoon to the little village of Chatelle St. Denis, where, stopping to refresh the horses, we wandered onwards on foot, first visiting the churchyard,—a lovely spot, with flowers planted on all the graves, and a little wooden cross placed at the head of each. Continuing our walk, we ascended a green sloping bank, and from thence looked down a rapidly descending grassy slope, abruptly terminated by the deep channel of a wild dashing torrent forcing its way through rocks and stones, now hid by

the large masses of trees on its verge, now dancing along brightly and gaily in the sunlight. On the opposite bank the rocks rose perpendicular for many feet, covered with hanging festoons of creeping plants and tufted brushwood; and then the surface sloped back into a rich greensward above, with woods and little cottages peeping from them; whilst, higher still, black savage crags seemed to frown on the sunny landscape below.

Amid such scenes we wandered on awhile in much enjoyment. I had advanced alone a few paces, and a sudden turn round a projecting part of the road brought me in sight of—"The Lake—the Lake!" It was now my turn to call out to W—; and there, seen through an opening between two hills, lay, like a vast plain of burnished gold, in the evening sunbeams, the beauteous Lake of Geneva! Beyond towered the highest peaks we have yet seen of the Alps. It was, in truth, some little time ere I could realize it was a mountain that I looked on, and thought it must be a bank of white clouds. O that my pen had power to portray the scene which a few minutes later burst upon us! The sky above was cloudless, a very flood of light poured upon the lower part of the valley, while a mist hung on some of the rocky mountains which close it in, as though loath to leave a scene so fair. Then, again, it seemed drawn like a belt across the gigantic mountain, while, far above it, soared the snowy peak, towering in calm sublimity toward heaven,—and far, far beneath lay the clear and placid Leman! As we gazed entranced, and with thoughts almost too deep for utterance, the sun gradually cast a hue of radiance over rock and wood and valley, resting on them, one by one, for a brief moment, as if to say good-night; and then—long after all else had passed into shade—a bright roseate hue threw its halo on the snow-capped mountain. As we looked, another and another

distant summit, till now unseen, had caught the parting ray, and glowed with the same intense colouring! For some bright moments this exquisite scene continued: then passed away, and left the awful heights in cold and stern grandeur. We wound our way, with vineyards on either side, for several miles before entering Vevay, having been most fortunate in the hour of our reaching the heights above, and got to this quiet and most comfortable hotel about seven o'clock.

Vevay, September.—Here we are at one of those spots I have heard so much of and longed to see ever since I learnt to love the sight of Nature's majesty and loveliness. Long shall I remember the Sunday we have spent here. After reading in the morning, we went to the lake and stood beside its deep blue waters rippling in the gentle breeze and brilliant sunshine. In truth, it is a fitting gem for such a shrine; and for those mountains this lake alone is worthy to be the mirror! About two o'clock we went to the Protestant Church. After climbing by a winding lane up a steep hill, we reached the fine old building, embosomed in venerable chestnuts, and looking down upon the loveliest part of the lake, with the gigantic "Dent de Midi" directly opposite. A flight of steps leads to the platform, in the centre of which stands the church. Seats are placed all along under the trees, and here we sat and watched the gathering together of the people,—the peasants all wearing their broad-brimmed hats and picturesque costume. After a while we entered. It is a large old church, with a remarkably good organ. We had seats near the pulpit, and were indeed delighted with the whole service. The minister was an intellectual-looking man, with an admirable manner, musical voice, and clear pronunciation. His prayer was beautiful. He gave out a psalm in the manner of the Scotch

Church service, which was sung most pleasingly : the deep mellow notes of the organ leading the congregation, for every one seemed to join. After the singing, the text, which was from the Psalms, was given out ; and then, in pure, simple, forcible language, he gave an admirable sermon. Every word seemed to come from his heart, and was well calculated to reach the hearts of others. It was a sermon to be felt as well as admired. Peculiarly delightful, too, it was to listen to such an one in a foreign land, in a foreign tongue, and to see so many hundreds all dwelling intently on these faithful words. The prayer and psalm after the sermon were equally solemn and devotional ; and then I was so reminded of Scotland, and of my own dear home, when the minister stood up with his arms raised in the peculiarly impressive manner of the Church of Scotland, and pronounced the blessing. Often will memory recall that pastor and his people in the church at lovely Vevay ; and sometimes a prayer will ascend especially for them when "all churches" are mentioned in our own land. We walked round the church, and saw the tombs of Ludlow the regicide, and of Broughton, who read the sentence of death to Charles I. They died here in obscurity and in exile. After again enjoying the view from the platform we went down to the shore, and there sat and listened to the music of the murmuring waves gently rippling on the beach. The quiet bark skimming the liquid mirror with noiseless wing passed and repassed us, the graceful outline of its hull visible even under the surface of the clear blue water, while, in the sunset glow, the suspended oar seemed to be distilling drops of molten gold from its glittering blade. It was an evening

"Where not a beam, nor air, nor leaf is lost,
But hath a part of being, and a sense
Of that which is of all—Creator and Defence."

We had intended to start early next morning, but being delayed several hours by something connected with those tiresome passports, we hired a boat and went upon the lake. There was more motion than I expected, or liked, so I believe in this, the greatest enjoyment to me was in the idea ! However, we had a lovely view of Vevay, also of Gingough opposite, and Meillerie immortalized by Rousseau.

By the time we landed, the passports were forthcoming, so that we recommenced our journey. The road winds along the shores of the lake, through avenues of large chestnut trees, with clustering vines, luxuriant flowers, and peaceful little cottages. I was continually reminded of the scenes so early imprinted on my memory in "Pierre and his Family," a favourite tale of my childhood. In many a little white cottage, with trellised vine leaves, beneath the shade of a spreading chestnut, I pictured to myself the fondly cherished home of the Vaudois family. We passed "Clarens," so exquisitely described in *Childe Harold*: then "Montreux," even more beautifully situated: and very shortly stopped at the gate of the "Castle of Chillon." A remarkably intelligent Swiss girl conducted us to the various places of interest. Here, then, I actually stood on that spot whose associations had so impressed my imagination. We entered the dark vault "below the surface of the lake:" we counted the "seven columns deep and old,"

" Dim with a dull imprisoned ray,
A sunbeam which hath lost its way,
And through the crevice and the cleft
Of a thick wall is fallen and left,
Creeping o'er the floor so damp,
Like a marsh's meteor lamp."

On the third column Byron's name is engraved by his own

hand, and passing onwards we came to Bonnivard's pillar. It makes the blood run cold to see the very ring which fastened a fellow-creature to the huge stone column, like a wild beast—to stand on the very stone worn to some depth by the constant pacing of the unhappy man for six long weary years! *Three steps* were all that he could take, and this living death was inflicted by his fellow-men!

“Chillon! thy prison is a holy place,
And thy sad floor an altar—for 'twas trod
Until his very steps have left a trace,
Worn, as if the cold pavement were a sod,
By Bonnivard! May none those marks efface,
For they appeal from tyranny to God!”

The death of his two brothers in this living tomb adds almost a deeper melancholy to the mournful place. The only ray of comfort is the recollection, that, on the victory gained by the Canton, he was not only himself liberated, but found his beloved country free. We saw some other places of torture, but they are too horrible to dwell upon. I could not help remarking to our little guide how thankful we should be that our lives were cast in such peaceful times, and that we should pray to God long to spare us from the power of a religion that could inflict tortures like these upon its opponents. She assented with much earnestness and apparent feeling. Continuing our way we passed

“The little isle,
Which in my very face did smile,
The only one in view,”

and entered the valley of the Rhone. Evening brought us to Bex. I walked to the windows of our room whilst waiting for such preparations for tea as the place afforded, and there, so near as almost to cast its giant shadow on me, rose the

mighty "Dent de Midi!" It was one of those impressions which seem, one scarce knows why, to linger in the mind; and often has that dark mountain risen up before me when brighter scenes have been unthought of. Having got up early next morning, I was rewarded by seeing the sun rise on the stupendous heights all around the little village. First one snowy peak and then another was bathed in the golden beams of the breaking day. The scenery became wilder and more grand as we penetrated into the bosom of the pass. At one part, where the valley suddenly narrows, is the remarkable bridge over whose arch "a key unlocks a kingdom." This is at St. Maurice, a small place, strongly fortified, being the frontier town between the Canton de Vaud and the Canton of the Vallais. We were delayed on the bridge to show our passports and pay the frontier duty, in the very best position for seeing the peculiar features of the strange wild scene. The bridge is literally supported by the base of the "Dent de Morcles" on one side, and on the other by that of the "Dent de Midi," whose bold rocks project so far as scarcely to leave room for the river which rushes impetuously in its narrow bed. An old castle crowns a precipitous crag above, and in the narrowest part of the defile are the fortifications on either side. For hours we travelled on, walled in by these stupendous mountains, assuming different forms at every turn. At a few miles' distance from Maurice are yet visible the awful and desolating effects of a torrent of mud, as it is well termed, which descended, in 1835, from the sides of the "Dent de Midi" into the valley. It forced a passage for itself through the pine forest, snapping the largest trees like twigs. The high road was covered for 900 feet, and fields and houses were overwhelmed by it. We saw, still lying on the top of the débris, enormous blocks of limestone of many

tons' weight, which had floated like corks on the surface of the resistless avalanche. A fine object in this part of our journey was the waterfall of Sallenche, which descends into the valley of the Rhone from a narrow black ravine. Its height is 280 feet, but the last part of the fall is not more than 120. It is a fine body of water, and the spray is bright and beautiful in the summer sun. Martigny was our mid-day resting-place, a spot so lovely we could well content have there pitched our tabernacle for a time, but we had not even a day to spare ; and after exchanging many a friendly salutation with the peasants, whose kindly "Bonjour, bien, bien, bonjour!" was given with a pleasant smile as they passed, we were again *en route*, reaching the "Hôtel du Lion d'Or," at Sion, early in the evening. W—— walked out: I having sprained my ankle, could not accompany him, and therefore occupy myself in bringing up my Journal to this point. It seems like a dream to fancy that ere I write in it again, we shall have crossed the mighty Alps !

Milan, Monday.—Is it even so, that we have witnessed those unequalled scenes, and have been in the very bosom of the Alps ? But I must continue from where I left off the day before we got to Brieg. We were off from Sion by seven. I was particularly struck with the situation of many of the villages scattered on the mountain's side, at a height so extraordinary, one marvels how the inhabitants have access to their eagle's nests ! Close to Tourtemagne, a pretty little town, is a fine waterfall : a romantic walk through lanes, overhung with fruit trees, leads to it from the inn, and you hear the roaring of the water before it comes in sight. In the centre of a huge basin of rocks is the fall. It is not so high as the Sallenche, but a larger body of water, falling in a most graceful

curve, while the spray, glittering with a thousand colours in the sun's rays, is cast to a great distance. But its greatest charm is in situation—the only life-like thing amid those barren rocks. Just before reaching the narrow turn to it, is a little cottage, from whence a nice-looking young woman brought a plank of wood to put across a rivulet that must be passed ; and on our return, as we had no silver, she sent a child, a little toddling thing about four years old, with us to bring some back. She was a pretty little flaxen-haired girl, and looking up in my face with a smile, she put her little hand in mine with entire satisfaction. She could not understand a word of my French, but she smiled in reply as she trotted by my side with her wooden sabots, and in her funny little Swiss dress.

At two o'clock we left Tourtemagne, and proceeded on our way to Brieg—every now and then passing through scenes of desolation, caused by avalanches of mud and stone, and the consequent rise of the river. For miles together the bridges had been swept away, and the trees laid prostrate ; and on both sides of the road immense piles of stones and rocks are heaped up which have been removed from it. Not long after we left Tourtemagne it began to rain, giving us some fears for the eventful morrow. As we approached Brieg, Ferdinando pointed out, amid the dark mountains, the route we were to take next day. It seemed truly as if we were to pierce the clouds. We reached Brieg early ; a dirty gloomy hotel, the "Poste," in a narrow dark street. The rooms comfortable in a special degree, so that I listened with a feeling akin to despair to Ferdinando's account of some who had been detained, even days, in this wretched hamlet, by weather unpropitious for crossing the mountains. It would be difficult to say how often I got up through the first part of the night to ascertain, if possible, what our fate was to be !

Before daylight Ferdinando knocked at the door with the joyful intelligence that there was no rain, and by five o'clock we had actually commenced our long anticipated passage of the Simplon. The four horses slowly dragged the light carriage up the steep ascent, which commences, in fact, from the very door of the hotel, so slowly at some parts that we scarcely felt we were moving. The surface of the road is very excellent, everywhere thirty feet wide, and with sharp high stones at a few yards' distance from each other as a kind of parapet. Soon after leaving Brieg the road makes a wide sweep, turning away from the Glytzhorn towards the Breithorn, and passing by the side of a wooded hill, on the top of which is a chapel, and a string of little white shrines called a Calvary. It then again approaches the side of a precipice overhanging the gorge of the Saltine. The effect of this place was, in some respects, heightened to us by the mist which hung in masses over great parts of the perpendicular sides, so densely that it was only here and there we could catch a glimpse of the immense depth below, with the torrent of the Saltine at the bottom. We seemed to be gazing into a fathomless abyss, and the sound of roaring waters, which we could not see, gave a mysterious awe to the feelings with which we looked down. Never shall I forget the first sight of the glaciers, far, far above our heads, as, clear and bright in the morning sun, they pierced the blue sky above the vapoury clouds that hung around them. How incredible seemed the idea, that ere mid-day we should be at the very feet of those dazzling pyramids of ice and snow! Upwards we slowly crept, some new beauty opening at every instant. The road bends round the valley of the Ganther until it crosses the Saltine by a lofty bridge called "Pont du Ganther." This part of the wild ravine is subject to avalanches every

winter ; the bridge is therefore peculiarly constructed, so as to give as little resistance as possible to their fury. After passing this bridge, the road by many zig-zags reaches Berésal, the first refuge. Here the horses rested, and we procured for ourselves a second breakfast of bread and milk, for which the keen mountain air had fully prepared us, and then walked on. It was to me a strange new feeling to be wandering thus alone in such a place. Mountains on mountains above and around, forests of pine trees, rocks and furious torrents, and a few goats our only living companions ! The first gallery or artificial passage cut in the face of a precipice is that of Schalbet, 95 feet long, and 3920 feet above Brieg. Not long after passing this we had our first view of the glorious Bernese Alps : the glittering snowy peaks of the Breithorn, Jungfrau, and Mönch. Below the Jungfrau is the glacier of Aletsch, one of the largest among the Alps, of which we had previously a glimpse. What an overpowering sensation it is to gaze on those everlasting hills ! It gives one to feel the infinite power and majesty of the Creator of all the ends of the earth ! They seem so far raised above man, and all his little world of thought and feelings—so sublime in their calm majesty, so unchangeable ! And then comes with such force the remembrance that they are but the hiding of his power, the very footstool of the King of kings and Lord of lords ; and that this God who created those glorious and mighty monuments, is the same who gives its loveliness to the little violet hidden in its leafy nest by the torrent side ; and more than this, who is ever watching over the most insignificant of his creatures, numbering the very hairs of their heads, and listening to their faintest cry for help and protection. Near the fifth refuge is the wildest and most savage part of the ascent—a scene truly of dreary magnificence.

The pine no longer finds even the little soil it requires ; the lovely Alpine flowers no longer bloom around ; nothing but rocks—rocks black with the storms of ages—mountains with their eternal snows piled above—glaciers on every side arrested in their course, and stiffened into rest—below, an almost unfathomable abyss, with torrents surging amid the rocks, and roaring cataracts bursting forth, and with resistless fury plunging on their headlong way. Nought is here but the majesty and power of Nature ! No trace of man save the wondrous road itself, which now hangs on the very verge of one of those fearful precipices—now disappears through the solid rock, and again spans a foaming torrent, and climbs the mountain's brow ! It is here the celebrated glacier galleries are reached, partly excavated, partly built of masonry, and strongly arched. You enter an immense cavern, cold and dark ; the sound of roaring waters is around you ; but in vain for some time you look around for the cause. An opening at length gives light—a strange light ; and well it may ; for when you come opposite you see a sheet of silver ; and looking upwards, a torrent of water is dashing overhead in a wide and beautiful arch, which further down becomes broken into light and feathery spray.

A second gallery—the same sound of waters, and the very cavern walls seem to tremble with the rushing of the stream below your feet. It is after passing through the last of these galleries that the finest view of the whole range of the Bernese Alps is obtained. They seem to enclose you in their bosom : you look into the crevices on their sides ; the Simplon frowns on you from behind, whilst, bright with the many colours their glaciers give forth to the morning sun, rise the noble Jungfrau and Breithorn. Several experienced travellers joined us, while standing in awe and wonder at

this spot, and said it was the *finest scene* they had ever witnessed. Often as I had felt the force and grandeur of these lines before, never as now, when almost unconsciously they rose to my lips, had their sublime beauty so filled my heart:—

“The palaces of Nature, whose vast walls
Have pinnaced in clouds their snowy scalps;
And throned eternity in icy halls
Of cold sublimity, where forms and falls
The avalanche—the thunder-bolt of snow!
All that expands the spirit, yet appals,
Gathers around their summits, as to show
How earth may pierce to heaven, yet leave vain man below!”

A thick cloud lay around the mighty Jungfrau, about half way down, whilst the bright summit soared far into the heavens—the pine forests below looked like brushwood, the torrents like threads; and as for the villages, they seemed so much another world left far behind, that it was difficult for the mind to realize that a few hours only had passed since our feet had trodden them! About a hundred yards above the sixth refuge is the highest part of the Simplon pass. A simple cross of wood marks the spot. As a remembrance we picked at its foot some sprigs of a little lowly wild-flower, which had been hardy enough, even in these cold and barren regions, to open its bright eye to the sun. We were surprised to find the cold affect us so little. The air was keen and sharp, but the sun was warm, and W—— was able to keep the carriage windows open the whole way, except where passing through occasional fogs. Before commencing the descent, huge wooden sabots were put upon the wheels, not an unnecessary precaution certainly, for the horses rush at a frightful speed down places where it would almost make one nervous

even to walk ! Three miles from the top is the village and inn of Simplon, where we dined (on chamois, by the way, which we thought excellent) and rested the horses. On setting out again, I began to wonder—very prematurely, as I soon found—how it was that, in constructing this marvellous road, the Italians were said to have performed the most wonderful part of the work ; but when we reached the Gorge of Gondo, it seemed impossible to conceive how any art or power of man could continue a road through such apparently insurmountable difficulties. This pass is considered one of the grandest and most savage in the Alps. Black perpendicular rocks deepen and narrow at every step, till they overhang the road so completely, that the drops of water from them fall at times on the other side of the carriage as you pass along. At the spot where the foaming torrent of the Doveria is crossed by the Ponte Alto, the way for a moment seems completely barred by an immense block of granite, which approaches so nearly to the opposite side as scarcely to leave room for the impetuous stream to escape ! To our amazement we found ourselves in a cavern 600 feet long, cut through the solid rock, and not merely along its edge, but hollowed out through the huge mass. It took 100 men, working in gangs day and night, eighteen months to pierce it, the miners being suspended by ropes to the face of the rock until the necessary lodgements were effected ! Not forty yards from this spot, so close to the road that its spray washes it, is the waterfall of Frascinone. We got out to see it better, and certainly it is impossible to conceive more impressive grandeur. The rocks rising on each side straight as walls to a giddy and terrific height—the little stripe of blue sky seen above—the torrent roaring in the dark gulf below—the white foam of the waterfall, the bold arch of the bridge, and the black and yawning

mouth of the cavern, from whence we had just emerged, altogether form a scene rarely, if anywhere, equalled. A number of zig-zags conduct the road downward on its way ; the turns are very sharp ; and as the carriage swung from side to side, it was impossible not to feel somewhat nervous, for every here and there are precipices so close, that a false step of the horses must plunge you over them. After passing Isella, a village where is the Sardinian Custom-house, we reached another dreary savage pass. The severe storms of 1839 visited this spot with utter destruction. The bridges, and a great part of the road, were swept away ; and though a new line is now finished, nothing can efface the air of desolation around. At the end of this gorge the pines begin again to find a place of rest, and to clothe the hitherto bare mountains. At Crevola the Doveria is crossed for the last time by a fine bridge ninety feet high, and we left Val Dovedro and entered Val d'Ossola. A change, indeed, comes over the scene ! Grandeur, desolation, and solitude are exchanged for loveliness, richness, and luxuriant cultivation. Chestnut and mulberry trees line the road ; vines hang in graceful festoons from tree to tree, clothing them with pendant drapery, while the dark clusters hang over the road. Fields of maize, with its dark green leaves and drooping flowery crown ; white cottages peeping from amid the trellised vines ; churches with their tall spires pointing to the skies ; a soft balmy air ; and all lighted up by the radiance of a glorious setting sun—all told of another clime, and we felt that we had entered Italy ! It was a delicious drive, most refreshing after the excitement of the day. We had a distant view of that scene so often described, the Val d'Ossola, spread out at our feet ; but it was too dark to distinguish any of its features by the time we reached it. Right glad were we to find ourselves in the town

of Domo d'Ossola, though by no means were we charmed by this our first specimen of Italian inns; always excepting, however, the delicious fruit presented both at tea and breakfast: figs bursting with ripeness—peaches, pears, and bunches of grapes—fresh and most agreeable proofs that we were now in a land of sunny skies.


With this impression of the bright skies of Italy, I confess I was somewhat surprised on waking to look out upon a decidedly wet morning. We were comforted, however, with the thought how fortunate we had been in having such a favourable day intermediate between two wet ones. It cleared up in time for us to see the lovely Lago Maggiore, though not in all its charms, for it wanted the lighting up of the bright sun. Still there is a peculiar softness and quiet beauty in it very pleasing. The colour is not the heavenly blue of Lemman, but there is more glassy stillness; and the little boats, with their white awnings, glide by like spectres. It is richly wooded to the very edge, and terraces of vines overhang the pebbly shore. We stopped to rest at Baveno, on its borders, and were detained longer than usual, owing to poor Ferdinando's new horse, which he had bought at Vevay, being quite knocked up. The inn was exceedingly uncomfortable, noisy, and dirty, and we were glad to hasten out and wander by the calm and lovely lake. The mountains all round it are of beautiful forms, and from being wooded from the base give peculiar richness to the landscape. We had intended going to see the celebrated "Isola Bella," but it was too damp for W——, and, moreover, we did not care much for seeing it nearer, as it is not by any means so picturesque as I expected; indeed, the actual beauty of Isola Madre is much more attractive. Very slowly did we perform the remainder of the day's journey, owing to that stupid horse, which proved more

sulky than tired ; but we could not regret it, as the whole road was by the water's side, and we saw a thousand different views, and the fine background of the snowy Alps. Near Arona, where we stopped for the night, is the marvellous colossal statue of St. Carlo Borromeo. It stands on a high ridge behind the town, on a pedestal of forty feet—the statue itself being sixty feet. Ferdinando told us he had made a fourth person at one time in the head, and that the inside of the nose is a comfortable arm-chair ! We were not tempted however, to undergo the fatigue of ascending so many steps, and were satisfied with his account. The effect of the massive figure against the clear sky is very good, even at some distance. Another wet day followed, and I asked our vetturino where was the “*bel tempo*” he had promised in Italy ; but he hardly allows this to be Italy. I must, however, confess that these occasional wet days were rather pleasurable to me. I had arranged and hung up several bags in the carriage, in which were all the various articles for daily use. Books, work, and all that was needful for pressing and drying the leaves and flowers which we gathered as memorials of the different places of interest we visited, were thus at hand ; nor were bouquets of flowers and baskets of fruit wanting to refresh us with their sweetness and fragrance. Having made those arrangements which, though trivial in themselves, contribute much to one's comfort in a long journey, there was positive enjoyment in the repose of being able quietly to read one's book, or half dreamily to recall the scenes which had so powerfully excited the mind ; and certainly at this particular part of the road there was nothing in the present to withdraw one from the past. Long straight avenues of poplars or chestnuts, only enlivened by the sight of vineyards in every opening ; but just before reaching Sesto Calende is a most


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glorious view of Monte Rosa. It rose beyond the dark foreground of the wooded plain in its pure whiteness, the sun seeming to pour upon it all the light and brilliancy he denied to us. We crossed in a clumsily managed and tedious ferry to Sesto Calende, a stupid dirty little town, where we were detained half an hour in the street with passports and custom-house officers, the latter being the first Austrian specimens of these gentry we had met with. Surly and dignified as they looked, they notwithstanding took a franc and let us off with a peep into a carpet bag! Ferdinando here took an additional horse to urge on the obstinate grey. A good-humoured Italian lad accompanied it, who whistled the mellifluous airs of his country quite scientifically. After he left us our locomotive power became more miserably insufficient than ever, the refractory horse not only choosing his own pace, but every ten minutes stopping short. At every inn or post we came to, Ferdinando exclaimed, in accents of moving entreaty, "Un cavallo! un cavallo!" but all in vain. He was quite *au désespoir*, striking his forehead and indulging in most wonderful exclamations, which could not but cause a smile, although we truly commiserated his distress, and fully shared the annoyance, since it was impossible to calculate when we should reach Milan, especially as the creature now took to backing opposite every house we passed, as if determined to end its journey there. At length, when our patience was all but exhausted, and night coming on, we fell in with a diligence heavily laden, and consequently going very slowly. The spirit of rivalry, I suppose, after every other kind of spirit had been flogged out of him, seemed to revive the grey, and Ferdinando managed to keep just behind the lumbering vehicle for some miles, indeed until within sight of Milan. We at last reached

the entrance to the city park, under the fine arch of Napoleon, which ends the Simplon road, the "Arco della Pace." It was too dark to do more than distinguish the outline. We were detained a few minutes with passports, and then drove on. After being warned by the police there, to keep a good look-out from the windows in passing through the Corso, as many light-fingered gentlemen take advantage of the dark shadows of the fine avenue of trees to lie in wait and assist passengers in disposing of some of the smaller articles of luggage, I very valiantly leaned half out of one window, and whether my alarming position kept them at bay or not, we certainly encountered no such depredators. In about twenty minutes we were rolling on that smooth pavement which one finds so often in Italian cities, having two lines of flags for the wheels, over which they bowl along as if on a railway, with ordinary paving between for the horses' feet. Not long after entering the town we stopped at the hotel "Croce di Malta," which had been highly recommended.



THE DOMO OF MILAN.

URELY it is vain to attempt in words to do justice to the Domo of Milan ! to convey by mere description an idea of its elaborate beauty, its world of exquisite designs. Rather let me appeal to the imagination, and, borrowing an expression from imperial lips, bid such as would realize it create for themselves a "dream in marble," a fairy structure all unmeet for aught but the soft breeze of heaven to touch, or the cloudless vault of an Italian sky to cover ! It has been often with me in my visions since that evening hour in which first I saw it, when I gazed again and again lest I should behold the fair form fade from my sight ! And yet I must confess that the first view of the façade was to me somewhat disappointing. I cannot admire the style of architecture there unhappily mingled with the exquisite Gothic. But the objection applies to the façade alone. In every other part the harmony of design seems wonderful, considering the different eras in which it was built. It is constructed of Candoglia marble, to which time gives a yellow tinge, shading off and adding

softness to the dazzling brilliancy of the newer and upper portions—the fretted pinnacles and statues—which yet retain their snowy whiteness. The effect of these, standing out in all their purity and ethereal lightness against the clear blue of an Italian sky, is magical. We walked round and round the area in which it stands. The nearer you approach, the more exquisite the finish of every part, of every single leaf and flower, is found to be. It is, however, on ascending to the top that one realizes fully the outpouring of beauty that has been lavished. A flight of two hundred steps conducts to the roof of the Cathedral. These consist of a spiral staircase inside a lofty turret, with open marble tracery work, through which I, at least, cast many an involuntary glance, with nervous dread, upon the dazzling roof, and the city far below. Arrived at the gallery upon the top of the turret, the view, as may well be supposed, is truly magnificent. Spread out, as on a map, before the eye, are the plains of Lombardy, bounded on one side by the chain of Alps, “Monte Rosa,” “Breithorn,” “Mont Blanc,” “Great St. Bernard,” “Mont Cenis ;” more to the right, “St. Gothard,” and the “Splügen,” and beyond these the mountains of the Tyrol. The position of Venice was pointed out ; and slowly passing the eye over the richly cultivated plains, it rested next on the range of Apennines—the Mediterranean stretched in the far distance, and then on the valleys of Piedmont, whilst the thoughts might revel in the associations called forth by the name. It was a scene to expand and elevate the mind, as well as to live indelibly in the memory. And now, what shall I say of the interior of this glorious edifice ! The feeling produced by its vastness, its solemn grandeur, its impressive silence, is almost overpowering. A misty veil seems to hang around the massy pillars, a “dim religious light” solemnizes every feature.



MILAN CATHEDRAL.

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Drawn by S. Prati

Engraved by W. Walz

MILAN CATHEDRAL.

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Standing near the choir, and looking upwards to the vaulted roof, around on the intense colouring,—the gem-like radiance of the windows, then through the vast aisles with their colossal pillars, a calm, elevated feeling,—a consciousness of standing in a temple of the living God came over me. A kindred emotion bore my thoughts back, with a freshness of sympathy to that enthusiastic pride and glory which the Jews of old and their prophet-king were wont to feel when they looked on that Temple which stood on Mount Zion—the “beauty of holiness,” the “joy of the whole earth.” And yet, even in the midst of feelings so appropriate to such a scene, do we not well to remember that these same Jews, who thus well-nigh worshipped the visible beauty of the Temple built by the direction of the Lord their God, despised and rejected Him who was the true glory of that Temple—who would have none of Him, because He came not with pomp and circumstance of earthly beauty? Do we not well to remember that to Him who “sitteth on the clouds,” “whose throne is in the heavens,” the contrite tear of a penitent heart is a sacrifice more acceptable than all the grandeur and the beauty of the most gorgeous fane that human art hath ever raised? The windows in the upper range are of golden colour, while the three glorious ones to the east are gemmed with the richest crimson, blue, and scarlet: the whole casting a varied hue on the marble statues and mosaics within. The gigantic pulpits of bronze, dark and massive, contrast again with this vivid colouring. While moving on in silence, a sweet, soft, low tone stole upon the ear, which seemed in mysterious harmony with our solemnized feelings at the moment. It seemed to rise and sweep along the vaulted roof, and whisper softest music round each massive pillar. It was the hour of vespers, the gloom of twilight

deepened, a shadowy majesty rested on all around. The faint light through the windows served only to cast the long shadows of the columns across the marble pavement ; and as we walked onward with a noiseless step, every now and then a kneeling form was darkly seen, or the shadow of some one stealing by. I have heard and read of such scenes, but the reality surpassed my utmost imagination. It was silence that might be felt, and the darkness deepened around us till the shadows melted away. A deep-toned bell broke the stillness, and when its last echoes had died upon the ear, suddenly a bright, ruddy light appeared in the far distance, and priests bearing torches passed along the aisles. It was strange to see the peculiar hue of torch-light resting for a brief moment on the tall columns and the sculptured marble, and deepening the shadows when it had passed by. A moment after, a low-toned voice chanted a few words : we heard the clanking of keys, the signal for the departure of all who like us had lingered there during the twilight hour.

THE BRERA GALLERY.



MUST own it was with considerable disappointment I passed through the first few rooms of the Brera Gallery at Milan. I had expected to be charmed with this my first introduction to many of the Italian masters. It may be that my expectations were too highly raised ; certain it is I saw nothing in these to satisfy them fully. Indeed I was almost beginning to fear my taste had not yet learned to appreciate that which I might afterwards admire, when my disappointment was ended by entering the seventh room. It is a small octagon, and contains but few pictures : and this is well ; for who could turn their eyes to look on aught beside *the* two pictures, which are here placed with every possible advantage of light and position ?

The first I came to was Raphael's "Sposalizio." It bears his own name and the date, and has met with the favour it deserves, having had many celebrated owners. In this picture, Mary and Joseph stand opposite each other, the high-priest between them joins their hands : Joseph is in the act

of putting the ring on the finger of the bride. On Mary's left is a group of lovely maidens, and on Joseph's right some young men, supposed to have been lovers, as they are breaking their wands, while Joseph holds his, which has blossomed into a lily—according to the legend, his sign of acceptance. In the background is the lofty Temple and a flight of steps. But it is in the figure and face of Mary that the dignified yet tender softness and beauty of the picture shine forth ; and with these too, there is a look of elevation, as though she dwelt on the future she knew to be before her, as well as a subdued and almost melancholy expression which gives an indescribable charm to the whole figure. It is not a picture to which description can do justice. And what shall I say of that to which I next turned ? It was the famous Guercino—"Abraham dismissing Hagar." I cannot even name with patience the criticisms that have condemned any part of this painting. Who could look on the touching scene, and not be carried away by its truth and power ! Look at Abraham's venerable figure—at that mingled expression of human sorrow and regret—pity for Hagar, tenderness for his child, his first-born son, struggling against a stern sense of duty—and, superior to all such emotions, the prophetic glance into the future. Do you not see his dark eyes kindle, as though he were saying, "The son of the bond-woman shall not be heir with the son of the free-woman," whilst yet his father's heart breathes forth the fervent prayer, "O that Ishmael may live before Thee !" Sarah is turning away—perhaps some relenting towards the mother and her child is dawning on her heart, and she dares not longer remain ; and yet there is triumph, too, in the proud figure and in the haughty step. What a contrast to poor Hagar ! O what a face is hers ! A tale of woe is written there ; concentrated anguish speaks


in every lineament. As you look into the depths of her troubled eyes, you know that she feels it to be a matter of life or death to her that hangs on the breath of his lips. She does not speak: there is no need; for what appeal could so melt the heart as that pale face, the gaze of those earnest eyes, which seem to say, "And can it be that thou wilt banish us for ever?" The doubt is no more—she has read her fate: and you look on into the next moment, and see her woman's pride conquering her woman's agony, as, turning away without one spoken word, she takes her banished child by the hand, and departs, "to wander in the wilderness of Beersheba."

In the eleventh room is another picture of great power and beauty. It is an agonizing subject—the Martyrdom of Saint Catherine; but the meek and patient submission expressed in the countenance—the sublime and exalted tranquillity—the eyes raised with such full, deep trust and confidence to heaven, seemingly unconscious of all surrounding objects, instruments of torture or the presence of ferocious men—these are all wonderfully portrayed.

From the Palazzo Brera we drove to the Church of Santa Maria delle Grazie, where is the famous "Cenacolo." Multitudinous engravings have made this Last Supper by Leonardo da Vinci familiar to every one. It was really mournful to find such an utter wreck of this masterly creation of genius. The mere outline of three or four of the figures is all that remains to tell that this splendid fresco ever existed on the now soiled and discoloured wall. Even the countenance of our Lord, one of the most distinct that can yet be recognised, requires the closest examination to trace it. It is singular that this very head was said to have been left unfinished by Leonardo: he is reported to have made the following remark.

to his patron, Ludovico il Moro,—“Ancor gli mancava due teste da fare, quella di Christo, della quale non voleva cercare in terra, e non poteva tanto pensare che nella immaginazione gli paresse poter concepire, quella bellezza, e celeste grazie che dovrebbe essere in quella divinità incarnata.” Yet this head is now more distinguished than any other in the whole painting. In addition to the mischances which befell it and other treasures of the same kind at the time when the French soldiers were frequently quartered in the churches in Italy, the plaster on which this masterpiece of fresco was painted was not properly prepared, and Leonardo is supposed to have experimented on some composition which proved the ruin of his work. In the Brera there is a design of our Lord's head in black and red chalk, which assists one in forming an idea of what the finished picture must have been.

GENOA.

E left Milan next morning *en route* for Genoa. The country flat and uninteresting as to scenery. At mid-day we stopped to visit a splendid church about four miles from Pavia. "The Certosa of Pavia," as it is called, is certainly the finest building of the pure Italian style of architecture I have yet seen. An arched gateway leads into the great quadrangle, and at the far extremity stands the church. The façade is of the richest marble, and the designs of the basso-relievos are very beautiful—in fact, perfect pictures in stone. The interior is imposing. The ceiling is of deep blue, studded with golden stars, and the balustrades which enclose the numerous side chapels are richly gilt. In each of these chapels the altar-piece and pillars are of different marbles, some of the very rarest kind, while the floor and steps are inlaid with exquisite mosaics. Women are not permitted to enter these chapels; but a very civil monk who attended us allowed me to stand sufficiently within the rails to enable me to see the very fine paintings placed above the altars, com-

promising with his conscience, by putting a handkerchief on the stones, that my sacrilegious foot might not profane them by its contact! The only part I could not see, even by any device of my complaisant friend, was the high altar. W—— said it was gorgeous in the extreme, being literally covered with precious stones of every kind. The tomb of Giovanni Galeazzo, the founder, he also saw, and most magnificent it is. Foliage, flowers, birds, fruit, all in the brightest colours, and formed of the most costly materials, are lavished everywhere to ornament this splendid church. Some of the frescoes make one start, coming on them unexpectedly. One there is, representing a monk, who seems to be eatealing along in silence, and mysteriously watching you from a gallery above. It is admirably painted, and our being for a moment unquestionably deceived, afforded great amusement to the old man who conducted us. From the Certosa we soon reached Pavia. The entrance to the town is rather striking, but all attraction ceases on entering the streets, which are narrow and dirty. I have no pleasing recollections of our accommodation in the hotel there, though the best in the place; indeed, in such circumstances, we often found great relief in leaving our rooms as speedily as possible, and wandering away to the cathedrals, even though in themselves not particularly worth visiting. On this occasion we hastened to the Domo. The interior is like a vast cavern, dark and gloomy. The pulpits are very like fortresses, supported by colossal "termes" (the proper appellation, I believe), representing, we were told, the Fathers of the Church. In rich and beautiful contrast with the general gloom and heaviness in a brilliantly lighted little chapel, is the magnificent tomb of St. Augustine. This is an astonishing combination of everything most exquisite in workmanship. There are the

richest Gothic arches and pinnacles, bas-reliefs of weeping figures—funeral processions—triumphal cars—all designed with elaborate taste and beauty, and in the purest marble, producing an effect which it is difficult to conceive. The whole design of the tomb struck me as perfectly unique. It consists of four storeys. The basement—of Sienna marble, of a rich mellow tint: the tomb—on which is extended a fine statue of Augustine in his robes, and surrounded by numerous graceful figures. The canopy—which again is surmounted by pinnacles and statues—two hundred and ninety figures in all. The body of that celebrated man lies beneath this splendid tomb. A gilded grating enables you to see the silver coffin in which his bones are laid.

I could not but wish that J—— could have been with us as we stood looking at the rich details—the elaborate workmanship. He would have been greatly interested.

There are three good pictures in this church, but only one that pleased me—by Crespi. The light in which they all hang is exceedingly disadvantageous. I noticed here an instance of the sort of innate taste of the Italians for paintings. In the absence of the sacristan, a poor-looking tattered boy, to whom we happened to apply for directions where to find the tomb, took upon himself to accompany us; and when we turned from the chapel where we had remained so long, he not only showed us the paintings, but instantly pointed out the best light for each. We have repeatedly observed the same thing. I smiled as I imagined to myself a boy of the same class in our own country, being required to give such a specimen of his taste!

We were off betimes the following morning, crossing the river Po by a fine bridge. There was little to interest us in the country through which we passed; consequently I gave

myself up to the enjoyment of Cooper's "Travels in Italy," a book I purchased for three francs at Milan. As I have before said, I greatly enjoy the repose of less interesting scenery now and then, the quiet of our comfortable carriage, and the varied amusements of arranging the dried flowers which from day to day accumulate,—talking over what we have seen,—and reading of the experience of others. The heat, however, somewhat interfered with comfort on this occasion, so that we were not sorry to see in the distance the small town of Voghera, which we knew was our mid-day resting-place. After dinner we of course went to the cathedral, and were just in time to hear the organ—a fine deep-toned instrument, with some peculiarly sweet notes. It was soothing and refreshing in no ordinary degree, after the excessive heat of our morning's journey, to sit down in that large quiet old cathedral, and listen to those solemn chants, and the pealing notes of that organ.

The heat continued very oppressive all the afternoon, and when we reached Novi, very much tired and exhausted, we found the only inn a miserable place,—dirty, close, and noisy to a degree. Nothing could well be less inviting than the coffee and milk, the bread and the butter, which were set before us in the most primitive style. The people, however, were very civil, and evidently had nothing better to give—a discovery which greatly assists in reconciling one to things as they are. The road becomes very beautiful beyond Novi. Fine hills in the distance, rocks with strangely marked strata by the road-side, and long shady avenues of chestnut trees,—a pleasing contrast to the heat and monotony of the previous day's journey. At Ronco we took on an additional horse, as we encountered here the first branch of the Apennines. The ascent is not long, and much less steep than the descent on

the opposite side, which was at times very far from pleasant, on account of the sharp and sudden turns. I was quite nervous—more so even than when descending the Simplon ; but, in fact, I had not recovered from the annoyance encountered that morning at the Sardinian frontier, of the first rude douanier we have fallen in with. Nothing would do but everything must be opened, even my desk, which no one had ever touched before. One man, in particular, seized even a pair of sheets in our carpet-bag, and declared them contraband, informing us we must either leave them, or pay double their real value. I was almost in despair, for they were of the utmost value to us in such a journey. Our excellent Ferdinando did what he could to check this over-zealous official ; but I began to fear, fruitlessly, when he advised me to speak to the master. I did so, and the man, though unwilling, could not refuse. So up stairs I went, and there a civil gentlemanly old man met me. The douanier made out his case, and at any other moment I should have been much amused to see him hold forth “gli lenzuoli,” exhibiting in triumph that they were quite new. I, in my turn, simply stated why we had them—why they were of such consequence to us, and showed the mark on them which the douanier had not chosen to look at before. The old man politely inquired if we had any more. I marvelled whether they really imagined we were linen-merchants, and that our carriage was full of such articles ! for on my replying we had no more with us, my adversary exclaimed, “he was by no means sure of that.” To my infinite satisfaction, however, he was silenced, and desired to replace the sheets without another word. I expressed my thanks to my old friend, and the discomfited official went down vowing vengeance against the rest of the things, which certainly underwent a terrible overhauling in consequence.

However, the old gentleman had his eye on him from the window above, when he opened my trunk, and this kept him within bounds a little. Altogether it was a disagreeable occurrence, though after all we had been very fortunate in being so long free from the least annoyance on this score.

At Armerotti we again came to the Apennines, the scenery in parts becoming very grand. Ferdinando pointed out in the distance Genoa, and soon its beautiful bay and the blue expanse of the Mediterranean were distinguishable. The approach to Genoa greatly delighted me. Villas, and gardens full of orange trees and flowering shrubs, on either side of the road, with trellised vines supported upon ranges of stone pillars. These are often placed tier above tier, and their rich ornaments contrast beautifully with the craggy rocks from which they sometimes seem to spring.

Altogether, there is something peculiar and appropriate in this approach, preparing one, so to speak, for the magnificent scene which greets the traveller, when on turning one of the abrupt declivities which jut upon the road, "Genoa la Superba" bursts upon the view ! It is built nearly in the form of a crescent, at the foot of mountains of various heights, some of the lower eminences being crowned with forts and ramparts, and their sides gay with palaces and terraced gardens. At each end of the crescent-shaped city are two noble piers, with lighthouses terminating both. One is particularly fine, rising between three and four hundred feet from the solid rock. Splendid houses line the principal streets, which though narrow, convey no idea of gloom ; while the shade they afford from the glare of the noon-day sun is most grateful. I was delighted with Genoa, even by the time we reached the "Albergo d'Italia," a very good hotel, with a most attentive and obliging landlord. Our rooms were quite charming, but

at such a height! Nos. 65 and 66! However, the heat was so intense, we were glad to have large airy apartments, even at the expense of climbing to them. We arranged to go out and see the church of "L'Annunziata," and return to tea before going up to our nest again. Well may people talk of the extraordinary magnificence of this church. It is one mass of gold and blue and gorgeous marble of every colour. Bright pictures, set in golden panels, look down from the roof, and lapis-lazuli is the ground wherever they are not. In the dome, which is lighted by windows all round, are paintings which, at that distance at least, are perfectly beautiful. The windows are set in massive golden frames, and the effect of crimson silk curtains on which the setting sun was shining, was nothing less than glorious. It is not the kind of magnificence that satisfies the mind in a church, at least not mine; still, of its kind, it is very striking. We looked in vain for a painting I had heard was in this church, and which I wished to see. Observing a priest walking in one of the aisles, I ventured to accost him, asking him if he could tell me where was the "Cena." He replied that he was himself a stranger, but pointing to a door not far from where we stood, he told me I should there find the sacristan. We followed his directions, and passing down a long dark passage, unhesitatingly opened a door which seemed to terminate it. Not finding this the case, and meeting no one, we still advanced, until we came to a large stone hall: this was empty, and we were just about to turn back, when through a partially opened door I perceived a monk sitting at a table writing. Concluding him to be the sacristan of whom we were in search, I advanced towards him; at the sound of footsteps he raised his eyes, and instantly starting up, uttered a most vehement exclamation of horror. His sudden motion completely startled

me, and I stood where I was, in vain attempting to make known our request. His gesticulation became so violent, and his screams, for indeed I cannot call them words, so wholly unintelligible, we could only gaze at his frantic excitement with surprise. At length the oft repeated "*La Signora*" threw some degree of light upon the subject, and my immediate retreat produced a more soothing effect than all my efforts at explanation. In fact, I had unconsciously entered the sacred precincts of the monastery belonging to the church, and his horror at the sudden appearance of a woman, where probably none had ever appeared before, had taken from him all presence of mind, and caused him to act in the ludicrous manner I have described. His distress, however, was so real, I could only most humbly express my regret, informing him that a priest had given us directions to seek the sacristan by the door at which we had entered. He seemed pacified when he learned these particulars, and yet more so when he saw us fairly into the church. When all was over we enjoyed a hearty laugh—though, I must say, I had no wish to prosecute any further our search after the missing sacristan. As we were leaving the church, however, we saw a party of strangers, accompanied by a man who proved to be the said individual. He took us to a small dark corner behind one of the aisles, and pointed out the painting we had sought. I was exceedingly disappointed, having heard that this "*Last Supper*" by Procaccino was much celebrated. I am afraid I may sometimes almost seem presumptuous in thus venturing to form my own opinion about many of these famous works of the old masters, but in the first place, I only speak of the impression they make on my own mind; and, moreover, I never can admire anything because I am bid. I once overheard a party discussing various

paintings. They evidently wished to do their duty scrupulously, but one of them ventured to express a doubt as to the degree of admiration to be bestowed on a very dark and fearful-looking picture,—one an artist might appreciate, but which none other could possibly regard with any pleasure. The very doubt seemed to astonish the rest of the party, and one exclaimed, "Oh! how can you! *Murray says so.*" Many a time since has the expression recurred to me—"Murray says so," therefore, perforce it must be thought "beautiful," "exquisite," &c. &c.

But to return. We retraced our steps to the hotel, and greatly enjoyed a really comfortable meal, after the wretched fare of the last two or three days. The heat, even during the night, was overpowering; and, combined with the torments of *living animals*, effectually put sleep to flight. I rose and looked out between one and two o'clock in the morning, upon a strange and beautiful spectacle. The lights sparkling like gems all round the bay, the rich glow of the ruby beacon-light upon the Molo Vecchio, which seemed like a star watching over the slumbering city,—the phantom-like vessels dimly revealed in the darkness,—with here and there a twinkling light on the waters, the marble whiteness of the houses near, and the utter stillness around,—nothing to be heard save the breaking of the swell against the rocks.

Sometimes, when rising very early in order to escape the great heat, the thought comes over me with a feeling of wonder that it is nearly the end of October! On the second morning after our arrival we were early astir, being anxious to see the famous "*Strada Nuova*," the Street of Palaces. It is far more magnificent than I had any idea of. It is certainly rather narrow; but the façades of the palaces are so beautiful, the marble pillars and sculptured ornaments give such a cheerful

aspect, without at all diminishing the massive splendour which distinguishes them, that the effect is scarcely injured by the narrowness, whilst unquestionably, in such weather as this, one's personal comfort is greatly increased. The Palazzo "Brignole Rosso" was the first we entered. It has a singular appearance outside, the walls being of a bright crimson, whilst the ornaments are of white marble. The doors of these palaces are enormous, opening at once upon an immense marble hall, through which you pass to a wide and massive flight of steps. At every landing of these are fine statues. At the top of the first flight we rang a bell, and were desired to go up to the second floor, where we should find the person whose business it was to show the palace. A pleasant old man made his appearance in answer to our summons, who led us at once into the bedroom of the Marchese, which came the very first in order,—a somewhat unexpected arrangement of the apartments, but one with which we afterwards became well acquainted. We were not much struck with this room, and passed on into the great hall. The "Rape of the Sabines," by Valerio Castello, a fine picture, is here; and four Guidos pleased me. The next room is called "La Primavera." Here are the most splendid Vandykes I ever beheld. One, a portrait of the Marquis on horseback; another, of the Marchioness; and a third, of a father and child; gave me a completely new idea of this grand painter. I had a good deal connected him in my own mind with the picturesque portraits of Charles the First, and other faces of the same cast, and, I am almost ashamed to add, with beautifully painted *point-lace*! Here, indeed, I saw him in a new and most powerful aspect; and I could have stood an hour before those three pictures with their rich deep colouring and noble expression. The second room, "La State," contains one of

the many pictures of the same subject—a St. Sebastian, by Guido. It is so life-like as to be painful to look upon. There are one or two Guercinos; but the “Saviour banishing the buyers and sellers from the Temple” was the one I noticed most. It is undoubtedly very finely executed: the colouring possesses all the wonted richness of this master, but the subject seemed to me badly conceived. Our Lord’s figure has not the calm dignity which is the only expression becoming the solemn words he used. There is too much of human feeling and anger; while the countenances of the people express terror rather than what one conceives they would feel. I was not particularly struck with the pictures in “L’Autunno,” and passed on to the fourth room, “L’Inverno,” in which, to my taste, are the finest of all these paintings. “The Pharisees questioning our Lord on the Tribute-Money,” by Vandyke, is one of the most perfect pictures I have seen. Our Lord’s face wears the most heavenly expression,—more nearly approaching to one’s ideal of it than anything we have yet met with. I was at once reminded of the words He spoke, “Render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar’s, and to God the things that are God’s;” thus with calm majesty disappointing the deep cunning of his questioners. Nothing can be more admirable than the contrast between the noble dignity of Jesus, and the artful yet obsequious expression of the two Jews. It is a picture to dwell upon till you realize the scene portrayed—till you forget that it is a painting, and almost believe yourself present. I think the effect of this picture on me more resembles that which I felt so strongly with regard to the Guercino I have already spoken of in the Brera—Abraham dismissing Hagar, than any other. I cannot particularize more of the collection in this one room, but will only add, that I was delighted with all, except one by

Paul Veronese—"Judith holding the head of Holofernes," which revolted by its subject, though one's admiration could not be withheld from the execution. We walked through five or six rooms in succession, till my eyes ached and my head got confused; but in the twelfth room I was arrested by a magnificent painting by my favourite, Guercino, of "Cleopatra with the Asp on her Arm." I know not that I ever before had my idea of the regal beauty of this proud queen realized. From the balcony of this truly princely palace we looked out on groves of orange trees, and the beautiful oleander, with its rich crimson blossoms, alike delighting the eye and scenting the air with fragrance. Immediately opposite is the palace which was occupied by our Queen-Dowager Adelaide, now the Jesuits' College.

We found it difficult to decide which of the numerous palaces and picture-galleries we should next visit, but were so tired and really unable to appreciate more pictures, that we resolved to vary the calls on our admiration by choosing the "Palazzo Serra," instead of "Durazza," or "Garibaldi," which, I believe, rank next to the "Brignole Rosso," for their galleries. The saloon in the "Palazzo Serra" is literally laden with precious things. The ceilings—the bas-reliefs—the varied marbles—the mirrors which reflect the gilded panels a thousand times, till you scarcely know where the real room begins—the lapis-lazuli doors and tables—all combine to make this saloon bewildering in its splendour. It is said to have cost a million of francs, and one can quite believe it. I noticed two beautiful pieces of tapestry—copies from the famous Sybils of Domenichino and Guercino at Rome.

We walked the whole length of this unrivalled street of palaces, and at every step some new feature in the scene struck my fancy. Here we first saw generally used the white

veils of which I had often heard ; and, in truth, the effect of numbers of these veiled figures is highly picturesque. The veils are usually fastened at the back of the head by the rich and luxuriant plaits of hair, which seem to be the pride alike of rich and poor, and sometimes with a silver arrow of the beautiful Genoese workmanship. The younger women I saw were mostly pretty, and their figures graceful, though I cannot allow that my ideas of Italian beauty have yet been realized. I should rather say their whole appearance is *picturesque* ; indeed, I was continually drawing pictures in my mind, as a group of girls, with baskets of grapes on their heads, intermingled tastefully with bright flowers, were to be seen standing so as to form an admirable foreground to some massive portal of one or another of the princely palaces. The endless variety of costume—the gay regimentals—contrasting with and enlivening the sombre attire of monks and priests and *sœurs de charité*, all contributed to the charm of this novel and striking scene.

Later in the day we took a carriage to the Church “St. Stefano della Porta,” to see the famous picture of the Martyrdom of St. Stephen, by Raphael and Giulio Romano. The whole was designed by Raphael, but only a small portion was finished by him. A single glance tells one that it is a very uncommon painting. As a work of art it is magnificent ; and perhaps I shall only betray want of taste and due appreciation when I say it is not a picture that realizes my ideas of perfection. Certainly the figure and expression of St. Stephen is all one could desire. There is a holy tranquillity in the countenance—a confiding trust, such as nothing earthly can shake—and one seems almost to hear those words, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit !” But no other part pleased me. The face and expression of our Lord are doubtless fine ; but

neither is what I should have liked for such a scene and subject. And then, there is a figure of God the Father introduced, which in itself is an unpardonable outrage ! The figures of the men casting the stones are not by any means good. In short, I may fairly say, that as a whole I was disappointed with this celebrated work. We walked back, and passed the cathedral ; but finding the doors closed, went on to the hotel. At the table-d'hôte we met two most agreeable and intelligent American ladies from Boston, who, having travelled a great deal, and lived for many winters at Rome, gave us much practical information of a very useful kind concerning lodgings and divers domestic arrangements. In the evening we enjoyed a walk on the top of an immense range of buildings, apparently storehouses, erected upon arches all along the quays. The view of the city and bay is very fine from this wall, and the refreshing breeze from the sea makes it a favourite evening promenade.

It was with regret we made preparations for leaving Genoa next morning, as our short stay prevented our seeing much that would have been very attractive ; but the one object we had at heart rendered it desirable that we should not prolong the excitement and fatigue of travelling, beyond what was absolutely necessary. By a little management and previous arrangement, however, we generally contrived to see those objects and visit those places which possessed the greatest interest.

On leaving Genoa we entered upon the loveliest drive, I believe I may fearlessly assert, in the world ! the " Riviera di Levante." The road begins almost immediately to ascend after passing the environs of the city, and from the first summit of the overhanging mountains there is a magnificent view of Genoa, with its harbour and ships, its towers,

domes, and spires, with thousands of white houses dotting the sides of the hill which surround it. We stopped here and looked back on the proud city below, and out upon the blue Mediterranean, impressing that panorama on our memory as perhaps lovelier than we had ever seen, or were likely to see again ! And yet as we proceeded new scenes of beauty opened upon us, such as do indeed baffle description, though one cannot help at least trying to convey an idea of what has given such intense enjoyment. The sides of the hills, abruptly sloping to the coast, are covered with the brightest vegetation ; and shrubs that seem more suited to tropical climes grow in the richest profusion. There are olive and fig trees, with their many sweet and scriptural associations, carrying one's mind to the times of our blessed Lord—his beautiful parables and lessons of heavenly wisdom ; vineyards casting garlands and festoons from tree to tree, and giving added grace to each ; orange and lemon groves, with their dark green leaves and golden fruit ; pomegranates and palms ; cypresses like tall spires towering above ; and the stone-pine, beautiful in itself, but still more so from its associations in one's mind with the lovely landscapes and Italian scenes of Claude Lorraine. Hedges of the sword-like aloe, and everywhere the cactus or Indian fig grow in the greatest luxuriance on the very ledges of the rocks which rise from the sea-shore. Here and there the rich berries of the arbutus appear like bunches of coral, while sweet roses blossom from every little nook—and all this but as the minute finishing of the grander features of the landscape. One lovely bay succeeds another, some soft and still, with a pebbly beach on which the waves seem to flow gently, as though whispering sweet music ; others again, have bold and rugged shores, overhung with dark rocks and precipices, the hidden breakers underneath only revealed by:

the angry foam of the receding waves, urged by the swell of the sea upon them ; while the hardy pine hangs over the very brink, as though vainly seeking its reflection in the troubled waters below. Stretching far away in its calm bright loveliness, till lost in a flood of dazzling light, is the blue, the ever beautiful Mediterranean. The houses and villages, with gaily painted gables, scattered here and there, stand sometimes so high on the mountains that it seems a marvel how human power could have placed them there. The terraced gardens, with statues peeping out from the flowers, and other gay decorations, strike one at once as so in harmony where all is bright, and where sky and earth and sea seem enjoying a continual holiday ! Onward we went through this paradise of beauty, till after climbing a very steep part of the mountain we stopped at a little inn most beautifully situated on the side of a wooded bank, with a grove of acacias before it. Here the view already enjoyed as we ascended opened out still more magnificently. Such a panorama of varied picturesqueness I never looked on ! The air, too, not only breathed fragrance, but seemed pouring forth its joyous notes. It was just twelve o'clock when we reached this village inn, and all around the bells of the churches were chiming.

We climbed a little stony path which led us to the opposite side of the mountain. Woods, with villages scattered among vineyards, crowned each of the hills ; and as we walked onwards clusters of grapes hung over our heads. As we sat down to rest, a pretty young woman, with bright black eyes, leading a little child by the hand, came up to us, and, with a kindly gracefulness, offered us some freshly gathered figs and grapes which she had tastefully arranged on large vine leaves, with the tendrils twisted around them so as to form a simple basket. The incident pleased me, and in such a

spot! Nor must I omit to add, that she would not accept anything for them. I could not deny myself the pleasure of calling forth a smile and blush of delight from the little one, as she looked up in my face, when she discovered the trifle I had slipped into her little hand. Our dinner at the inn was thoroughly Italian; consisting of freshly caught fish, an omelette, and the most delicious figs and Muscatelle grapes I ever tasted. Certainly the whole of this day is marked with delightful recollections! The scenery continued of the same varied beauty all the way to "Sestri." Here, on our arrival, Ferdinando, to our great satisfaction, drove through an avenue of orange trees to "L'Europa," a hotel out of the town, and on the very shore of the Mediterranean. We were in time to enjoy a walk on the sands, from whence we saw the sun set in glory on the sea. Lower and lower the bright orb sank till its disk rested for a moment on the liquid gold, and then left but the radiance of its parting beams to tell where it had been.

The following day we rested at mid-day at Borghetto, a quiet village with a miserable inn, where we could get nothing eatable. I greatly enjoyed the evening drive to Spezzia, a beautiful little town on the gulf of that name. For several days past, during some hours in the early morning, and in the cool of the evening, I had mounted on the box beside Ferdinando, enjoying both the fresh air and the scenery. I found our worthy vetturino, on further acquaintance, exceedingly intelligent, and we had a great deal of conversation on many subjects. On one occasion, after I had endeavoured to speak to him on religious subjects, he volunteered the opinion that he could not think confession to the priests right: "It is often employed for the worst purposes—that I know," he continued, speaking with great energy; adding, with an ex-

pression of simple reverence which struck me greatly, "For me, I confess my sins to my God and my Saviour." I was often surprised at his remarks, evincing very little respect or value for the ceremonies of his Church; I tried to say some things which might be of use to him, and which I hope he may sometimes think of. We felt much interested in the kindhearted man, whilst his anxious solicitude for us both might well excite our best wishes for his welfare. The Gulf of Spezzia is in the form of a crescent, and so remarkable for security and every advantage of natural position, that Napoleon, in his triumphant career through Italy, had determined to make it one of the great naval stations of his empire.

It was a delicious evening, and again we were in time for a ramble, and to see the golden halo of sunset on sea and land. The variety of leaf and tint is a great charm all along these shores, and of course the foliage was new to me. The shades of green, from the rich dark tint of the fig to the peculiar hue of the olive—on one side a bluish green, and on the other almost white—mingling with the gorgeous colouring which Autumn was beginning to show forth, added to the brilliancy of the sunset hour. There are the remains of the battlements of the old castle, which carry back the mind to the past history of the place. But our pleasant sojourn at Spezzia was not without some drawback, arising from a species of annoyance we have once or twice met with previously, —the natural result of our arrangement with Ferdinando, though not in any degree a fault of his, but of the system of ordinary vetturino-travelling in Italy. It is customary for those who select this mode of travelling to contract with the owner of the carriage and horses not only to take them a certain distance in a given time, but also to provide them

board and lodging on the journey for a stipulated amount. As is too often the case in any kind of contract, the temptation to do the thing cheaply at the expense of his employer's comfort is too much for the honesty of the individual in question ; and again, the landlords finding that they cannot obtain their full profits from the vetturinos, who have the choice of hotels, generally speaking, in their own power, detest the system, and revenge themselves on the unfortunate traveller who enters their establishment under such evil auspices. It was some time ere we discovered the mistake we had made ; for our worthy Ferdinando was usually able to prevent any annoyance to us by at once asking for the best accommodation ; but on this occasion, and once before, the question was asked and answered as to who was paymaster, and the amount of comfort to be bestowed was settled by the landlord, without any time being allowed to Ferdinando to declare his readiness to pay for proper accommodation. This time, however, we were on our guard ; and after giving one look to the wretched apartment into which we were ushered, and disregarding the strongest assertions that it was the only one disengaged, we sent for Ferdinando, who instantly settled the matter in our favour. It was laughable to see the coolness with which all the former declarations of the landlord were forgotten ; nay, he did not seem to think it requisite to go through any form of apology or excuse, but instantly led the way to a very different apartment—in appearance at least ! This was the last time we were annoyed in this way ; and as soon as we reached Leghorn, where our first engagement with Ferdinando ended, we changed it entirely—paying him solely for his carriage and horses, and his own services. This is not only a far more comfortable plan in every way, but in reality cheaper, since

we paid higher for very inferior accommodation : and if it was so with one we had every reason to think well of, and who was so really anxious for our comfort as Ferdinando, it must be a thousand times worse where the vetturino is utterly careless and indifferent, if not positively dishonest. To return to our rooms at Spezzia, I may truly say it was a memorable night ! In the first place, when I lighted the little lamp of olive oil which had been placed by my bedside about an hour previously, I discovered a perfect swarm of horrid little bloodthirsty animals drowned in the oil into which their unwary gambols had precipitated them ! I felt sundry qualms on getting into bed, but even there I did not anticipate the dire reality ! Literally, they were there in dozens ! I gave up all hope of sleeping, for I was in a perfect fever of irritation in a few minutes. I at last took refuge in a book, hoping to wile away some of the weary waking hours, and calm the nervous excitement and irritation produced by them and the fatigues of the day. Shall I be believed when I say, that my relentless foes actually leapt upon the pages I was reading, five and six at a time ! It makes me creep even now to think of the horrors of that night. My last resource was to sit by the window watching for daylight. Yet in the morning the landlord looked all amazement when I recounted my experience, and with the dignity of injured innocence exclaimed, that "Madame was the first person who had ever seen anything of the kind in his house."

The assistance of two sturdy oxen was required to drag us up some very steep ascents, where we came in sight of the Marble Mountains of Carrara. The heat was intense, and the mid-day sun shone with dazzling brightness on the glittering peaks. We looked up with no small interest to these

quarries, opened in various parts of the mountain sides, whence have proceeded the costly materials of so many beautiful creations of genius and art. The outline of these mountains is peculiar, and unlike anything else we had seen. The quarries are well worthy of a visit, but we were both much tired, and the excessive heat put it out of the question for us to attempt it. Unfortunately we got little rest ; a wretched room and uneatable food fell to our portion. We met, however, with a civil cicerone, who seems to be placed there to show the various studios to travellers, and he took us to a little inn, where we got something prepared at least with more attention to cleanliness, though little enough to boast of after all. We went through four or five of the studios. How pure and beautiful the marble is ! Some of the statues were very well executed, but of course there were plenty very poor, and inferior as works of art. In passing down one of the streets, we saw an enormous block of marble destined for a colossal statue of a man on horseback, on its way from the mountain to the town, a distance of about three miles. It had taken eight days to bring it where we saw it, and the cicerone told us it would take at least eight more to place it in the artist's studio. It was moved along upon wooden rollers, with twenty-four pairs of oxen drawing it. We reached the pretty little town of Pietra Santa in time for a ramble on one of the sides of the mountain range which surrounds the town. Following a zig-zag path, we found ourselves in the middle of a large wood of olive trees. I was delighted with the fantastic forms which the olive assumes when it is old : all its youthful stiffness vanishes, and it becomes one of the best possible studies for an artist. I gathered some of the pale leaves, as well as some of the bright wild-flowers which bloomed around in profusion, as mementos of that pleasant

ramble. The next morning saw us off betimes, for we were impatient to reach Pisa. I longed with almost childish eagerness to see the "Leaning Tower of Pisa," so associated with early recollections and school-room days. We arrived about noon, and at once proceeded in search of the famous group of buildings which give such interest to the place. One cannot but wish that a situation such as this were more generally chosen for noble edifices like these. Quite apart from the town, and rising immediately from the smooth green turf, stands the group;—the Cathedral—the Campanile—the Baptistery—and the Campo Santo. Nothing can be finer or more imposing than the effect produced by their standing thus singly and apart from all ordinary habitations. The rich tint of the marble, which in most parts has become almost yellow, and seems still more so in the full effulgence of an Italian sun, is one very remarkable beauty which instantly strikes the eye; while the light and shade caused by the numberless columns and arches by which all the buildings are surrounded, vary still more the effect of the colouring of the marble. Sometimes the little airy column is marked by a line of brightness standing out from the deep shade of the building; at other times the shadow of the column is spread along the wall in dark transparency. I dwell the more on the effect of the *tout ensemble*, because in the cathedral itself I was disappointed. Perhaps this was partly the consequence of my having heard a gentleman we met compare it with that dream of beauty at Milan! But for this I should probably have done it greater justice. Yet I know not; there is such confusion in its form, such a multitude of sharp angles, that to me one façade only is beautiful. The façade which faces the Baptistery, with its numberless columns, is certainly very fine; but there is a

confusion and irregularity about the proportions generally which I cannot comprehend sufficiently to admire. I am not satisfied with myself that thus it should be, and I well may suspect the fault to lie in my taste, since Mr. Beckford has recorded his great admiration of this very cathedral. I wish I could return to it when I shall have become better acquainted with the style of architecture of which this is a specimen. To atone in some measure for the small meed of praise I have bestowed on the exterior in general, let me remark the admirable effect of its being placed on a terrace ascended by steps, adding thereby much to the majesty of its appearance. Passing from the glare of the noon-day sun, reflected on the golden-coloured marble, it is truly delicious to find one's-self in the cool, soft, subdued light pervading the interior. Five aisles are supported by a very forest of Corinthian pillars of Parian and Carrara marble. The walls above the arches are striped, blue and white marble. The roof (and neither does this please my unaccustomed eye in a cathedral) is flat, divided into compartments with richly gilt ornaments. The windows are of very brilliant stained glass, but so small that in themselves they are by no means striking, though the very dimness which is the result is soothing after the flood of brilliancy one has left without. The space usually occupied by the eastern window is here filled by gigantic gold-grounded mosaics, which are of great antiquity. Notwithstanding, I think them odious; but this heterodox opinion must be whispered, for the Sacristan pointed them out as the chief ornaments of the church! In the chapel of L'Annunziata is an altar of chased silver, also a bas-relief of Adam and Eve with the Serpent. Two figures by Andrea del Sarto I admired much. But the picture which does indeed enrich this cathedral is a St. Agnes

by the same master. The perfect purity of her loveliness seems to cast a halo around the painting. I could have wished to have had more time to examine some other paintings, but we were obliged to hasten to the Campanile—strange, even startling in its appearance! It leans from the perpendicular even more than I had expected—indeed, so much that I felt quite nervous on approaching close under the side to which it leans; for one could quite fancy that at any moment a breath of wind might cause its fall. Before we left, the fine chime of bells was rung in the Campanile. One of these bells is of immense power; it weighs 12,000 pounds, and has a tremendous depth and reverberation of tone, tending to show still more the strange security of this tower, which can support the weight of these enormous bells thus violently swung from side to side, and causing the whole fabric to vibrate with the sound.

The Baptistery is a circular building of rich variegated marble, with Corinthian pillars supporting the cupola. In the interior is a font exquisitely ornamented with lapis-lazuli and agates, and most delicate carving. The pulpit is of pure white marble, ornamented with basso-relievos of great excellence. A hurried glance was all we could afford to the Baptistery, as we wished to spend the little time left us in the Campo Santo. I regret our being so much hurried; for the Campo Santo is a place where one should either spend a week or merely walk through it, taking in the general effect, without attempting to examine any details. It is the most celebrated cemetery in Italy, and has given its name to all similar places of interment. It was built to enclose the earth which was brought by the Archbishop Ubaldo from the Holy Land in 1200. Slender pillars of white marble, with the most fairy-like tracery filling up the arches they

support, surround an oblong quadrangle, in the centre of which is the "sacred earth." It is difficult to say what is the impression produced by the enormous collection of sarcophagi, statues, relics of Grecian and Roman tombs, arches, pillars, ancient pieces of sculpture, basso-relievos; in short, a wondrous mixture of every kind of relic and art of almost every age. Some Egyptian mummies and tombs in good preservation are placed close to modern tablets, erected to the memory of families of note in Pisa. It is a strange medley, and in so brief a visit as ours was, leaves nothing but a confused and unsatisfied feeling in the mind. The paintings are curious and interesting from their great antiquity, but it must be difficult to understand the subjects, and to decipher the figures, amidst the decay and damp which have so much effaced them. One modern monument I cannot pass without a word of notice: it is the figure of a woman—the dazzling whiteness of the marble made more striking by the dim light and dusky hue of all around it. Her face and figure of queenlike majesty, but with an expression of intense anguish pent up within her own bosom, and hidden beneath a sternly cold exterior that is almost painful to look on, so real, so lifelike is it. This figure, we understood, was a portrait of the wife of him whose monument it is; and there was a medallion likeness of himself on the tomb. It is one of the finest pieces of sculpture I have yet seen. I gathered a few leaves growing opposite this monument, and our time having expired, we were obliged to return to the hotel.

From Pisa we proceeded the same day by railway to Leghorn, accomplishing the distance in about half an hour. The wind was so high the following morning we entirely gave up the idea of going on to Naples by sea. We therefore sent for Ferdinando, and, to my great satisfaction, made

an agreement with him to convey us to Rome. He had previously told us his home was in "Livorno," and at my special request he came back in the evening to conduct me to pay a visit to his wife and child. I was not a little curious to see the *ménage* of an Italian cottage, and was agreeably surprised when I did. After traversing several streets we reached a small house, with a fruit and vegetable shop on the ground-floor in front, and two very neat rooms, a bedroom and small parlour, behind. Everything was beautifully clean, and the arrangements evinced a degree of taste for which I was not prepared. With evident pride Ferdinando presented his wife to me, quite a young girl, not more than sixteen, with bright black eyes and beautiful hair, arranged in the classic manner so general here, very low on the head, with a large silver bodkin through the plaits. She exhibited to me, with no small satisfaction, a merry little babe of four months old, bundled up in their extraordinary fashion, and looking more like a trussed chicken than a human being! A venerable couple, his father and mother, completed the family group. My visit seemed to gratify them all, the pretty young wife particularly. She looked somewhat mournful when she heard her husband was going away again immediately; but added, with a pretty gracefulness which seems to belong to this nation, that she was happy that he should serve *me*. I shall often think with interest of the little home scene I witnessed in sunny Italy, when I visit some of our own people at W——.

Next morning it was necessary to prepare for a visit from the douaniers, who came to search our trunks, and what is called "plomb" the luggage. After a civil and not very strict investigation they saw all the boxes locked, and then fastened lead balls upon each, squeezing the balls flat with

an instrument which left imprinted the seal of the dogana. We had to pay ten francs for this ceremony, but it cleared us a great part of our journey. Ferdinando awaited our arrival at Pisa, where the carriage and horses had previously been left: it was like returning home to find ourselves once more comfortably settled in our old friend the carriage. The road was not particularly interesting. Our first resting-place was at Era; and that night we slept at "*L'Autriche Bianca*," a tolerably comfortable house, and very civil people. The next day we reached Poggibonsi to dinner: it is a very poor inn, but we had a nice walk through some vineyards. This town was for some years the residence of the Italian poet Boccaccio. He was buried in the church, and a fine monument erected to his memory, but by some unaccountable negligence both the tomb and the monument were lost or destroyed. We were anxious to reach Sienna early, that we might be able to visit its fine cathedral.

Finding nothing to detain us in the gloomy and comfortless inn—the best the town afforded, we gladly made our escape to the cathedral: it appeared to me the finest in this style of architecture we have yet seen; built of alternate black and red and white marble, the effect is most peculiar to an unaccustomed eye. The clustered pillars of the interior are fine, the capitals adorned with rich carvings of figures and foliage. At each end is a circular window of stained glass, and the roof is blue, studded with gold stars. The mosaic pavement is the greatest attraction of the interior, and quite unrivalled of its kind. It is not the ordinary tessellated pavement so common, but beautifully and softly shaded from dark gray into white. Figures and scenes are represented with great taste; the finest piece we saw was by Beccafumi, representing Adam and Eve leaving the Garden

of Eden after the Fall. A great part of this wonderful pavement is boarded over to preserve it, which, of course, injures the effect, although it is so managed that parts can be opened up. The Chigi Chapel is remarkable for its rich carving and costly ornaments, but we passed on to the library, in which are kept most exquisitely illuminated Missals. The brilliant colours, so soft, yet gorgeous, surpass anything I ever saw of this kind ; and I could have spent an hour in examining the exquisite designs. Here also we saw the celebrated antique group of the Three Graces, in Greek marble, found under the foundations in the thirteenth century.

Before returning to the inn, I was anxious to see a picture of which I had heard a great deal, so we found our way to the church of "St. Agostino;" and the result was almost a determination never again to go hunting after "wonderful pictures!" Never did I see anything more horrible than this! A dark confused mass of struggling forms, with a multitude of deformed-looking little wretches, more like kittens or rats than anything else ; but I wish not to impress anything so revolting on my memory by recording it. I was pleased with a St. Jerome by Spagnoletti, and the Baptism of Constantine by Francesco Vanni.

The Palazzo Pubblico, with its lofty tower, Della Mangia, stands in one of those large open areas which, in the ancient flourishing times of the Republic, were used for games and other popular amusements. The gates of Sienna are still remarkable, though of thirty-eight only nine now remain.

The following day's journey was truly as dreary, and utterly devoid of interest, as can be imagined. Not a blade of grass, not a shrub of any kind, will grow in this wretched soil. Soil, indeed, it is not ; neither is it rock ; but a species of burnt clay spread over the whole district far as the eye

can reach. It seems as if some volcanic devastation must thus have laid waste the whole country. We dined at Buon-convento, a small town. During our usual walk we discovered a country road with more signs of cultivation, where the vine, at least, grew luxuriantly. The clusters of grapes hung over the hedges, inviting us to a delicious feast as we wandered on. The inhabitants, as in most of these towns, are most wretched-looking creatures, and follow in troops, begging and scrambling for small coins. The road is a continued and wearisome ascent, and at San Guirico, a small town on a rocky eminence, it is frightfully steep. Again a long heavy drag brings you, after some miles, to a solitary inn called "La Scala d'Orcia," standing high up on a desolate plain. There we stopped for our night's quarters. The wind was howling and moaning dismally through the long passages, and large stone-floored, half empty rooms. Verily it looked like an abode for ghosts, if not for the bandits with which one's childish recollections of travellers' tales in Italy are associated! It was yet early, so in spite of visionary terrors, or the gusts of wind, I went out to look about. Climbing a height not far off, dreary was the scene that met my gaze! A barren monotonous wilderness spread far away, and black heavy masses of cloud rolled up from the horizon all around. The whole country looked a fitting haunt for the very genius of the storm; and as I turned to go back, it passed through my mind, "How fearfully grand a thunder-storm would be here!" In the large sitting-room we spied a hearth, suggesting the cheering idea of a fire, and sending for some logs of wood we soon had a lively blaze crackling and singing on it. There is always something cheerful in the bright flickering of a wood fire; and when I had let down some curtains over the windows, and drawn a table

close in round the fire, there was a look of home comfort even in that dreary room. Our tea seemed doubly refreshing, and I almost fancied my grandfather's graphic descriptions of these parts more interesting from the circumstances in which I again perused them.

Thus enjoying the genial warmth of the fireside, I had forgotten all about my fears for the storm, when there came a tremendous blast of wind, accompanied by a lurid flame, which lighted the whole room, and instantly a terrible crash of thunder caused the very foundation of the house to shake. Peal succeeded peal for some hours, and a more awful thunder-storm I do not remember. When it had passed away, the wind completely sank, and the night became still and quiet.

A continuation of the same dreary road brought us next day to the barren volcanic mountain of Radicofani, and through the deep ravine of the Formone. Huge masses of basalt seem to have been tossed here and there, and all vegetation obliterated. We passed Radicofani, a large straggling house: it is the inn described by my grandfather "as a fitting abode for witches, with its black rafted roofs and long dark passages." Still higher up on the mountain, on the very summit of the cone, is the ruined Castle of Ghino di Tacco. A very steep descent leads to the valley of Rigo, where we had to pass through a rapid stream, at times impassable, as Ferdinando told us, and shortly after arrived at the miserable little inn at Ponte Centino—the Papal frontier station and custom-house. Here our ten francs' worth of *laschia passare* ceased to benefit us, but the ever-potent assistance of a piastre easily settled the business. We met for the first time with an uncivil host and hostess, in addition to the bad fare, to which we are more accustomed. Not

long after leaving this ill-starred place, one of our horses fell and cut its knees most terribly ; whereupon Ferdinando proceeded to doctor it after a manner more national than humane, by throwing dry dust from the road upon the wound !

We gladly welcomed the sight of fine wood once more ; oak, cork, and olive trees line the road, and numberless cascades dash into a ravine below. San Lorenzo is the next town, built on a hill whence we obtained the first view of the Lake of Bolseno, with its picturesque shores, surrounded by lofty hills, covered with wood to their summit. Very beautiful is the descent into the valley. There are Etruscan ruins, the remains of the ancient city of Valsinium, portions of Corinthian pillars strewed among wild-flowers, caverns and fissures in the mountain sides, which at night are to be seen, as Mr. Beckford mentions, twinkling with lights, proving them to be human habitations. But amidst this profusion of Nature's loveliness, a strange feeling of utter stillness and loneliness reigns around this lake. Not a human dwelling on the shores—not a sail upon the waters—no sound of voices ; and, at the hour we reached it, not even a labourer to be seen ! The beauty of Lago Bolseno is treacherous indeed ; for amid all this luxuriance of vegetation, malaria is hidden in its most fatal form. We were told the labourers dare not remain in its vicinity after sunset, and no one has been able to examine the geology of the lake. No adequate reason, it appears, has ever been assigned for the terrible scourge in so fertile and beautiful a district. There is something almost fearful to a stranger in this invisible calamity—invisible save in its effects. It might be fancy, but we certainly thought a dark and heavy vapour hovered over the centre of the lake, and we could fancy that the spirit of the plague was shrouded in it !

The picturesque town of Bolseno is at some little distance from the lake. The inn very prettily situated, clean and nicely kept, with an exquisite view from the windows. After tea, as was my wont, I took up the traveller's book. Amid many strange names of no interest for me, my eye rested on a well-known hand and name, "The Marquis and Marchioness of D——," in dear M——'s handwriting. I inquired what rooms they had occupied, and, as I expected, found they were our own. It was pleasant to fancy they had been there, and certainly lent an interest to the room that it had not before.

A good night's rest refreshed us, and we set off early, so as to reach Viterbo in good time. Our excellent Ferdinando was always ready to meet our wishes,—starting early or late, as suited best what we wished to see, and even shortening the mid-day rest, if we were desirous to arrive early in the afternoon at our night's quarters. In this, as in all else, he differed from the generality of his class, who, at least, have the character of being tyrants as regards the movements of those who are so far at their mercy.

We got out, to walk in the early morning, as we were slowly winding up a steep ascent. Very lovely was the scene we looked on. The dewy mist had scattered diamonds on all around, which the bright sun was now gathering as spoils as they glittered beneath his beams. They rested with lingering fondness on the thousands of bright wild-flowers which enamelled the wooded banks by the side of the road,—while the morning mist, rising like a curtain, and still hiding the tops of the hills, permitted the radiant sunshine to fall on a part of the lake which lay encased within the mountains. We could not but own that the dark genius of the place had either shrunk from the contest with the orb of day, or lay in subtle beauty on the bosom of the waters!

A long ascent, which we but slowly climbed, even with the help of two additional horses, brought us at length to the town of Montefiascone, situated on a rocky eminence, and crowned with an old castle, commanding a fine view of the lake and surrounding country. I asked Ferdinando if there was not some tale connected with this place, and he instantly related the following, which one can but hope is an ill-natured invention. "The Bishop Johan Tugger was very fond of wine—'*comme de coutume avec ces gens-là*,' interposed he—especially of the vintage of Montefiascone. When particularly satisfied with the wine, he signified his approbation by the word '*Est*.' On the occasion when his libations were prolonged till he actually expired amid his flagons, he is said to have written, when speech failed him, on the wall at his side, '*Est, Est, Est*,' and thus this particular wine has since been designated." We procured a fiaschetta of it, which we took on with us to Viterbo. It is very delicious, sparkling and effervescing like champagne, but much sweeter.

The hotel "Aquila Nera," to which we went in Viterbo, is close to one of the pretty fountains for which this city is remarkable. As soon as we could we visited the church of St. Francisco, to see the famous picture of "The Deposition of the Cross," by Sebastian del Piombo. It is very injudiciously placed upon a gloomy wall, as it would require a flood of light to do justice to it. It is doubtless a masterly painting, and yet is unpleasing to me. We intended seeing the Cathedral, and wandered a long way to it, only to find the sacristan absent, at his dinner. We did not wait: the point being very doubtful whether it was worth seeing.

The road, for some distance after leaving Viterbo, skirts the margin of the Lago di Vico, a lovely little lake about three miles in circumference, whose steep sides are covered

with wood. It is supposed to be the crater of an extinct volcanic mountain, and there are traditions of an Etruscan city, said to have been overwhelmed by its eruptions.

A little beyond Lago di Vico are the heights of Monterosi, from the summit of which we enjoyed what is, I believe, rarely obtained, a clear and cloudless view of the whole expanse of country around.

Spread out before us, bounded on one side by the Apennines, and on the other by the ocean glittering in the horizon like a girdle of silver, lay that vast plain—the theatre of so much that has been of world-wide interest for thousands of years. In the centre of the plain, the object we had so longed to look upon—the “Eternal City,”—towers, temples, and tombs in countless numbers, and the stupendous dome of St. Peter’s standing out against the clear sky, rising in giant majesty above all. Yes, there was Rome! and as I looked upon it what a flood of associations and events connected with the world’s history rushed upon my recollection. The magic wand of fancy seemed anew to people those plains. Triumphant hosts passed along; eagles waved on high, on the proud banners; haughty warriors sped onwards; the car and the chariot rolled on:—the Emperor of the World approaches the Seven-Hilled City; the arches show forth the trophies of a thousand victories; and, as the sound of many waters, the voices of the assembled multitude arise; the mighty Cæsar passes beneath the arch of triumph;—“he went—he saw—he conquered!” and now fresh crowned with laurels, he leads back his veteran troops; the eagle’s flight is stayed, for the world is at his feet! Yet even amidst that bright scene are broken hearts and bowed heads. Captive kings add to the splendour of the conqueror’s glory, prisoners are there from every nation: the fair sons of the island in the west, sometime

esteemed too mean to tempt the conqueror to its shore, till the won world could offer him no more. And now they mingle with the captive crowd who in future ages shall reign when she who seemed but fitly named "Eternal" shall lie prostrate in dust—a very chaos of ruins—"the lone mother of dead nations." With this chain of thought, the visions of the glorious past faded away, and the present became all the more sadly prominent. The tumult of war, the din of conquest, with all their pomp and circumstance, have passed away—all now among the things that were. Stillness and desolation reign around her. Here and there may be seen a solitary tenement, meet habitation for the ragged vine-dresser, or the wretched tender of a few goats which feed among the scanty herbage, and start away from the passing traveller; or perchance the ruined fragment of some ancient tower, for what purpose reared the blackened crumbling stones refuse to tell. And this is the entrance to Rome—this the way to the once proud mistress of the world!

That night we spent at Ronciglione—a poor dirty town, with a miserable inn crowded with people, being the first stage from Rome.

Our impatience throughout the next day's journey was scarce to be restrained, and we hastened our departure from a miserable little hole, "La Storta," where we had to rest the horses,—the last pause in our pilgrimage ere entering the imperial city.

Oh! it was strange to look on the "yellow Tiber,"—to cross its waters flowing here through a wilderness of ruins and of tombs. As we passed beneath a noble archway, Byron's lines came to my recollection—

"Whose arch or pillar meets me,
Titus' or Trajan's? No; 'tis that of Time!"

In the midst of these interesting reminiscences we had to wend our way to the "dogana;" but thanks to a *piastre* we only went through the form, and were speedily set at liberty. The "Hôtel de la Russie" stands at the corner of the "Piazza del Popolo," quite at hand therefore on entering the city, and though not the one we intended to go to, we found it so comfortable that we did not regret the mistake. It was impossible to resist going out for a little that same evening, but a cutting east wind soon sent us back. The following was a day of rest, in every acceptation of the term, and one which we greatly needed, as the excitement and fatigue of our long journey were beginning to tell upon us; and yet what cause for thankfulness is it that W—— has borne both so much better than could have been expected.

I do not purpose writing any of my impressions of St. Peter's, save that it equalled, nay, if possible, surpassed, my most ardent imaginings. I shall defer it until our proposed return to Rome. Nevertheless, the day on which I first beheld that glorious temple is one to be remembered.

Here, alas! we were obliged to part with our trusty Ferdinando, as it did not suit his arrangements to go farther south at that season, except for a sum we did not feel it right to give merely to secure the greater amount of personal comfort from his attendance. We parted with mutual regret, and many charges did he give to the "*voiturier*" with whom we made an engagement, to care for us and serve us faithfully. This man had come from Naples with a family; and as he was anxious to return there, he could take us for much less, and in a shorter time also, having four horses. He was attentive and civil, but could not in any degree supply the place of Ferdinando.

We left Rome about eight o'clock on Tuesday morning;

and had a glimpse of the Coliseum and the Temple of Mars on our way to the Porta San Giovanni, through which passes the road to Naples. It is with feelings of excited interest one enters on the celebrated Appian Way. It has probably been little changed, scarcely even much repaired, since the days of the ancient empire. But it is not on the recollections which history supplies the mind here dwells; it is the foot-steps of *one man* which imparts so deep an interest to this road. Never before did I read the simple narrative of St. Paul's memorable journey to Rome with the same feelings as during our passage along the path once trodden by the holy Apostle;—of his meeting at the "Three Taverns" with the brethren who came from Rome to welcome him; and the comfort he derived from this proof of their sympathy, when, as we are told, "he thanked God and took courage." Oh, what a contrast to the triumphant entry into the imperial city, which had passed in visionary splendour before me from the heights of Monterosi, was the humble approach of this weary prisoner; and yet when men shall have ceased to tell of the fame and conquests of these mighty of the earth, the entrance of the humble follower of the despised Nazarene shall hold a place in the records of that Eternal Word which must remain till time shall be no more; and many a voice amid those who stand around the throne of the Majesty on high will bless the hour when first the Apostle of the Gentiles passed within the gates of Rome, bringing with him "glad tidings of great joy" to many who were then "sitting in darkness and in the shadow of death," strengthening "the saints in Cæsar's household," and preparing, in the very heart of the heathen empire, that wondrous "way of the Lord," which shall one day issue in the triumph of the Cross.

About four hours' travelling brought us to Albano. This

town is beautifully situated on a rising ground, and surrounded with groves of citron. Our mid-day rest for the horses gave us time to visit the Lago Albano. By the help of sundry rather confused directions, we succeeded in finding it without the assistance of a guide, and we are always glad when we can dispense with the services of these gentlemen. Though we had to climb a steep hill under a broiling sun, our exertions were amply rewarded. The deep basin in which the lake lies, is evidently the crater of an extinct volcano, and the effect is singular as well as beautiful, as you look down upon its dark unruffled bosom. It seems to lie below the reach of the summer storm or the winter blast, calm and still in its deep recess. Scarce a ripple answered to the gentle breeze that fanned us as we stood on the wooded banks, and looked into the transparent depths beneath. Around its shores, and almost washed by its waters, grow a profusion of lovely wild-flowers of every hue, peeping out from their leafy bowers, among the tangled brushwood. The little towns of Aricia and Nemi are situated on rocky eminences overhanging the lake, and are great additions to the picturesque beauty of the scene. For some time, after leaving Albano, the road passes through shrubberies of myrtle—daphne and arbutus, till the air is almost laden with their fragrance. I could not resist stopping the carriage, and getting out, to walk for a few minutes among these fragrant trees. I gathered several branches of myrtle, covered with the starry blossom, frequently using them as fans—for we were annoyed by the multitude of flies which every afternoon swarmed in the carriage.

Cisterna, a somewhat gloomy and comfortless inn, was our night quarter; leaving it at six next morning, and passing Torre Treponze, occupying the site of Appii Forum, men-

tioned by the sacred historian, we shortly after found we had entered on the Pontine marshes. Desolate they certainly are, —in many parts nothing but reeds growing from stagnant water are to be seen; yet I was, on the whole, agreeably surprised in passing through these far-famed marshes. The Herculean task of draining has been taken up by several of the Popes successively, and the road gradually raised and improved, till finally brought to its present state of perfection by Pius VI. and VII. The avenue of trees on either side prevents one being so sensible of the barrenness around; in short, as our four spirited little horses carried us along the smooth and level road at full trot, with the sunshine resting on the green plains and trees, so little of the terrible seemed there, I was almost inclined to think the danger ascribed to the place, if not unfounded, at least exaggerated. I was some time later all too sadly undeceived. A gentleman with whom W—— was acquainted, crossing the plains too late in the day, was seized with an attack of malaria on his arrival at Naples, and being previously delicate, he fell a victim to its effects.

At the first rising ground the marshes end, their extent being in all about twenty-five miles. The little town of Terracina occupies a bold and striking situation. House rises above house, and rock above rock. At one part the precipice has been converted into an impregnable fortress, merely by the addition of a few yards of building, and a little cutting away here and there. The cactus and Indian fig form appropriate hangings to this strange place, and a particularly fine palm-tree, on one of the high parts of the rock, adds to the effect of the whole. There are some Etruscan ruins of much interest, but the heat was so intense, we could only seek for a shady place for our usual walk. For a few moments

we stood on the rocky shore, but even there I felt the heat so overpowering I was obliged to return to the hotel. Outside the town we drove under an enormous rock, which actually overhangs the road, pushing it almost into the sea, and seeming to keep jealous watch over the pass of Lantulæ, where the Papal States end, and the Neapolitan kingdom begins. The road is excellent, still constructed on the foundations of the Appian Way. It is bordered on one side by steep rocks, gemmed with an endless variety of beautiful flowers and shrubs of myrtle. Heaths, too, of different kinds, cast a mantle of purple over many a rugged precipice on the other side. The sea washes the foundation of the Way.

Shortly after passing the barrier where passports are examined on the Neapolitan side, we came to a pestiferous lake of salt water, said to have been once the site of a town. At Fondi we had a very annoying search, all the more so from our having paid for a *lascia passare* at the frontier, and been at the pains of taking one of the officials with us to testify to the fact. Our witness, who had perched himself behind the carriage, probably had some errand of his own in the town, and, accordingly, had quietly disappeared before his services were required, leaving us at the mercy of a most disagreeable-looking set of custom-house officials.

From Fondi to Mola di Gaeta we had a delightful drive: on approaching the latter the scenery becomes surpassingly beautiful. Built upon a promontory jutting out into the sea, it forms one side of a little bay. The hotel to which we drove is in the outskirts of the town, close upon the shore, with a delicious orange garden sloping down from it to the water's edge. It is erected upon the foundations of an ancient edifice, which is said to have been the favourite villa of Cicero, whose assassination near this place is commemorated

by a ruined tower, still standing. A radiant evening was closing in as we reached this most lovely and bewitching spot. The rocky promontories and tall stone-pines threw their long shadows upon the sea; from many a way-side mound of wild-flowers, and many a grove of orange and myrtle, stole the gentle breeze, bearing on downy wing the sweetness of their breath; and over the bosom of the placid sea, now coloured by the slowly-fading hues of purple and of rose which the parting sun had bequeathed to the evening hour, glided the homeward-bound bark, the soft splash of its oars mingling with the murmuring waves upon the pebbly shore. And yet the memory of that hour is well-nigh weakened by the scene of glowing moonlight which succeeded it, as a little later we opened our windows and stood upon the balcony. That, in truth, is one of the most delicious reminiscences we have treasured of Italy's fair clime. The sleeping bay, with its circling arms faintly visible, stretching into far distance—the almost golden reflection on the trembling water, from the intense radiance of the moon—the hushed stillness which lay on every object, and seemed felt by all alike—and the sweet odours wafted from the orange blossoms, while the dark shining leaves glittered in the silvery beam—all threw a spell of beauty over our enchained and delighted senses, beyond anything I have ever experienced.

Next morning we left Mola di Gaeta so early that all around was yet bathed in moonlight—and it seemed strange to pass so suddenly, as we did from this, to a glowing sunrise two or three hours later. Travelling rapidly we reached the town of Capua before mid-day. A very miserable dinner was somewhat enlivened by the harps of two Italian youths, who played very nicely. We started as soon as possible, being anxious to arrive at Naples by day-light. Along the wide

straight avenue, which the road becomes beyond Capua, we met picturesque groups of peasants, in gay red handkerchiefs and coloured shirts, carrying baskets of grapes, often ornamented with bright flowers.

But we had little time to attend to them, so anxiously did we keep looking out for the first sight of Vesuvius. A turn in the road brought it at length into full view, and for once the tiresome Custom-house, which at the same instant reared its dingy front before us, was comparatively unheeded. The mountain stood out in beautiful relief against the transparent sky, and so distinct as to seem much nearer to us than in reality it was. From its highest point a column of pure white smoke rose slowly, and as it curled upwards, spreading out as it ascended, glowed almost to a rich crimson, either from the reflected fire of the crater beneath, or from the rays of the setting sun. Rapidly we passed on and drew near to Naples, and rapidly died away the glory of the evening skies; the short twilight was well-nigh gone ere we entered the busy and bewildering street of the Toledo: on either side dazzling shops, illuminated with many-coloured lamps, reflected again and again from glittering mirrors and sparkling jewellery in the windows. The crowds of people passing and repassing—the rapid driving of carriages hither and thither, the Babel-confusion of human cries and voices—the palaces, piazzas, churches, and fountains, which we hurried past, all told that we had reached at length the gayest and liveliest of Italian cities.

At the "Hotel des Etrangers" we were received with the most cordial kindness. For many years Madame Ungaro had been the faithful attendant of one very dear to me, so that it was with real gratification I looked forward to seeing her again. Our tea was prepared for us in a delightful

apartment furnished with many English comforts, wearing a look of home, most refreshing after such a journey, and all the more grateful that we had so long been strangers to it. I think there is generally a kind of desolate feeling in arriving, especially in the evening, in a large city where one knows not a single individual ; we were quite cheered, therefore, by our kindly welcome, and still more so when Ungaro put into my hands a large packet of letters from England. After the long weeks that had elapsed since we heard of our dear child, great indeed was our thankful happiness to receive good accounts of her, and of all our valued friends now so far away. A most comfortable bed, in a large airy room, was indeed a luxury after the miserable holes we have occupied lately, and the extreme cleanliness and order of this admirably conducted hotel, was an unceasing subject of remark and gratulation.

We passed a quiet Sunday with pleasure, finding ourselves once more in an English place of worship, and gratefully acknowledging the many mercies which had been vouchsafed to us since we left the shores of Britain.

Next morning saw us busily employed in search of lodgings, and having at last fixed on 28, Santa Lucia, we removed there early, and forthwith settled ourselves and our possessions in a most pleasant abode. This part of Naples faces the east, and in the early months of winter is extremely cool and agreeable as a residence, but after November it is the wisdom of all who come hither for health to migrate to the warmer quarter of the Chiaja, a precaution we found it necessary to adopt after a single month had elapsed.

My first few days' experience of Naples was rendered rather melancholy by an illness which followed my long continued fatigues. But let me gratefully acknowledge that it

proved only a cloud before the sunshine. It was not long before I began to be sensible of the effects of the delightful climate. A feeling of physical enjoyment, in merely living moving and breathing, succeeded, and seemed to increase daily. This, added to the extreme beauty of the scenery—the clear elasticity of the atmosphere—the exciting interest of the objects everywhere around us—and, above all, the manifest improvement in my husband's health, gave us every reason to congratulate ourselves that we had been led to turn our steps to Naples.

VISIT TO POMPEII.



BRIGHT morning gave promise of a favourable day for our projected visit to Pompeii. So eagerly did I anticipate this pleasure, that scarcely with patience could I sit in the railway carriage which—with a strange association of the present with the past—conveyed us thither.

In my earliest recollections the tragic fate of Pompeii was a subject of deepest interest to my imagination, and many a lingering wish have I had to behold it for myself. At length we stopped at —(how strangely it sounds!)—the Pompeii Station; but on entering a gate we found a guide who told us we were fully a mile and a half from the ruins. The day was broiling, the road dusty, but I could feel nothing, save that every step brought us nearer. Turning off from the high road, and passing through vineyards and cotton-fields, we came in sight of the enormous heaps of earth and ashes thrown out by the excavators. Winding by the side of these for a little way we reached a sudden turn, and walking on a few yards, an arched gateway stood before us. It was the

“ Gate of Herculaneum ”—the entrance to the “ Street of the Tombs ! ” We looked on Pompeii, the City of the Dead !

After standing for a few moments to realize the strange new ideas that crowded on the mind, we followed our guide first into the House of Diomede, the villa that was earliest disintombed at Pompeii, between 1771 and 1776. The rooms are just as they were originally, with paintings and mosaics in the principal apartments. The garden is surrounded by a colonnade of Corinthian pillars. At the gate the skeleton of Diomede was found, with a key in one hand and golden ornaments and coins in the other. In the subterranean corridors used as cellars, seventeen skeletons were discovered ; one of them, supposed from the number of jewels on her person to have been the wife of Diomede, crushed against the wall, where the mark of her form is still to be seen. With a feeling of shuddering horror we left the gloomy vaulted passage, and came next to a building where the ashes of the dead were deposited. Several monuments rise on either side of this “ the Street of the Tombs,” with here and there ornamented seats, where once grave senators sat and pondered on the affairs of the Commonwealth,—where once the fond mother sat and gazed upon her joyous-hearted child, dreaming bright dreams of his future greatness whilst he played at her feet,*—where once the sons and daughters of Pompeii, at the sweet hour of eve, sat and looked out on the broad and placid sea with its delicious coasts, and its varied and glowing hues taken from the rosy clouds which mirrored themselves in its bosom, whilst fragrance was wafted by every breath from the rich plains, the vineyards, and olive groves. We passed on : centuries melting away as we gazed—the past blending strangely with the present !

* The skeletons of a mother and child were found on one of these seats.

"The House of the Vestals." Here the word "Salve" (welcome) in mosaic, is on the door-sill of the chief room, as distinct as the day the letters were inlaid. Still and silent all! A welcome unheard by the ear seemed fittest for that scene of desolation. We entered and looked around, and vividly came the touching remembrance of the female ornaments and articles of young girls' toilets which were found here. Close to the House of the Vestals is a shop, in fact a sort of ancient café, where acid drinks, much used by the Romans, were sold, with the circular marks of the cups or glasses upon its marble counter. Still following our guide, we visited in succession, the "Custom-House," where weights and measures still in use in Naples were discovered; a place for the manufacture of soap; a baking-house with a large oven, and hand-mills for grinding corn; a wine and oil shop, where several "amphoræ" for holding such fluids were found. I scarcely knew why, but to me there was something far more impressive in all these little details of domestic life than in the grander public buildings. Amid these traces of a breathing, moving, busy existence, one feels oppressed with the reality of all around. It is not a dim and shadowy picture, such as history reveals to us. It is not the past we look on! We stand and think and speak as they did; we occupy their places with the same bodily frames; we eat and drink, sleep and wake, even as they did; the objects around are mostly so familiar, that at first we almost wonder at the awe that steals over us, when we begin to realize that all is not what it seems! Everything tells of the living, but life itself is gone! It is but the clay-cold form we behold,—the spirit that animated has departed: it is the city of the dead! Again we wandered on, and came to the house which the inscription, hewn in the marble over the door, as is the case

in most of the houses,—hewn whilst yet the inhabitants lived,—tells you is the house of Sallust. In giving some description of it, I will name at the same time the house of Pansa, which is perhaps even larger, though both are specimens of the kind of dwellings used by the rich and noble Romans. You enter, by a small passage, the “Vestibulum,” into a hall called the “Atrium,” generally surrounded by columns. From the sides of this hall are doors opening into small sleeping apartments; at the end are two recesses, devoted, we are told, to the ladies of the family. In the centre of the tessellated pavement, which adorns the hall, is a square reservoir for rain-water, called the “Impluvium.” Near this were usually placed the “lares,” or household gods. Opposite the principal entrance to the hall is the “Tablinum,” answering to our drawing-room, in which are to be found the richest mosaics, and finest frescoes and paintings, while off this room is the “Triclinium,” or dining-room. This apartment is generally found to possess raised marble couches: on these were laid soft cushions; and thus luxuriously the inhabitants reclined during their often prolonged hours of feasting; music also delighting them the while. At least in this way many of the arrangements, of which traces are discovered, seem to be best explained. In some of these apartments a narrow passage is observed, for the use of the numerous slaves in attendance, to obviate their presence in the room, or their passing to and fro therein. All these rooms open into a square colonnade or “Peristyle.” In the larger houses, other doors again lead from this species of inner court to places I felt inclined to designate as *cells*, but which, in fact, should be termed bedrooms, inasmuch as they must have been used as sleeping apartments, singularly comfortless as they are. I think every one must be struck

with the total absence of anything like comfort or domestic retirement in all these beautiful dwelling-places. The **delightful climate**, rendering artificial warmth unnecessary, is of course one **reason for this**; but, I must own, not even the delicious softness of a summer night, **not even** the peculiar brightness of the starlight, not the almost golden radiance of the moonbeams in the favoured clime, could reconcile me to such dark and cell-like apartments, as those pointed out in the palaces of these all but princely Romans. But to return to the house of Pansa. At one end of the Peristyle is the kitchen, here ornamented with numerous frescoes in excellent preservation. One was especially appropriate, representing the figure of a cook surrounded by the insignia of his office, —a spit, a ham, fish, and other articles. From the Peristyle an open passage leads to the garden, or “*Viridarium*,” always adorned with fountains, a basin for fish, statues, and a profusion of gay flowers. The walls too, were frequently painted with frescoes, representing columns, trees, and temples in perspective, so that at the entrance, looking through the whole suite of rooms, and on into the garden, the length was apparently much increased by the deceptive character of these frescoes. The effect must have been very brilliant; the eye taking in at one glance courts and rooms, floors inlaid with the richest colours, walls painted deep red, and blue and white, with light floating figures on the glowing ground, columns of pure white marble, the glittering spray of the fountains falling amid the rainbow tints of a thousand flowers! The “*House of the Tragic Poet*” is a beautiful specimen of one of these costly dwellings, though it is somewhat smaller than those already named: the mosaics are exceedingly good both in colour and design; and some of the frescoes are considered the finest yet discovered. One struck

me particularly: it represents a group of figures in a circle around one man, who is reading to them from a manuscript. The varied expression of interest brought out in each of the listeners is admirable. On the door-sill, as you enter, are the well-known characters in mosaic of "Cave Canem," beware of the dog. Formerly, a huge dog, with a very fierce aspect, was painted in mosaic just beyond these words of caution; but this fine piece of mosaic has, with many other valuable things, been removed from hence to the museum at Naples. A visit to that beautiful collection of works of art, and interesting relics of bygone ages, is rendered doubly attractive after one has wandered through the scenes they once adorned. They are no longer objects isolated, and of mere individual beauty; they acquire a far deeper interest from the associations with which one naturally surrounds them.

From this house we went across a wide street to the public baths. The white marble hot and cold baths remain in perfect preservation—the bronze seats once so softly cushioned—the niches in the walls once filled with noblest statues—the walls themselves yet covered with stucco, richly ornamented, and the pure white ground of the pavement, on which the mosaic designs show with exquisite effect, enable the imagination to form an idea of the extreme elegance and luxury of this favourite resort. In this cool spot we sat down to rest, and having provided ourselves with figs and grapes, my ordinary mid-day fare, we drank some water from the old well still adjoining the baths. It might be fancy, but it seemed to me the water I tasted made me realize the scenes of former days more vividly than ever. However that may be, with recruited strength we resumed our interesting labours, and visited next the public buildings of the town. The Forum is of an oblong shape, paved with marble, and supported by a



double row of columns. The sun shone as of old on the white glittering pillars, but all else was cold and still and dead ! On the right are the graceful remains of the Temple of Venus. Beyond this the Basilica, or court of justice, a majestic structure adorned with twenty-eight Corinthian columns. The Temple of Isis is in good preservation, and possesses peculiar interest : the walls are ornamented with the pomegranate, which was consecrated to their goddess. Statues stood in the niches around the building. Elevated on seven steps of Parian marble, was the altar, and close to it, on fluted pedestals, the statues of Isis and the silent and mystic Orus. A railing of bronze kept the crowd of worshippers from approaching this sacred place, as from hence were delivered the oracles which so long swayed the deluded and superstitious people. It is strange now to look on this altar. The veil of mystery has been rent, and there stand revealed the concealed stairs by which the priest ascended behind the statue, and himself spoke from the marble lips of the goddess !

We left the ruined fane, and passing on, came to a part of one of the public buildings where, at the moment of the city's destruction, workmen had been employed upon the columns—columns never destined to be finished ! They lie now as they were last touched two thousand years ago ! It is impossible to notice each object of classic and local interest pointed out as we proceeded along the Corso to the Theatre. Deep tracks of wheels are indented on the pavement—the tread of feet has visibly worn down the raised footpaths, and in these steps we trod !

It is a noble building that theatre : its pillars, its doors, its strong seats, rising one above another ; its vaulted passages : all are as perfect as though occupied the night before. But no tones of music will ever again swell within its walls,


and call their echoes forth. No voice of softest eloquence again wake the enthusiasm of listening thousands! the stream of life, for one and all, lies locked in the icy sleep of death!

We resumed our way over much of the site of the buried city to the Amphitheatre. It is supposed that not more than a third of the town has yet been excavated. This was one of the most interesting parts of the whole; presenting, as its utter silence does, so great a contrast to the stirring, exciting, almost maddening scenes, it once has witnessed! We sat down, and silently looked around. My fancy was busy, and soon created for itself a vivid picture of the past. The evening before the last sun rose on the gay, the luxurious, the dissipated Pompeii, seemed before me, and I thought, too, of the eve of the world's destruction by the Flood, as well as that which closed on the devoted Sodom and Gomorrah, whose sins and whose fate so peculiarly resembled those of this city. How serenely still, on the eve of the terrible night, sleeps the starlight on the unconscious city. How breathlessly its pillared streets repose in their security. How calmly the sculptured forms look down from their marble pedestals. How softly ripple the dark blue waves beyond; how cloudless the vaulted skies. The giant form of the vast Amphitheatre lies part in deeper shadow from the pale moonbeam resting on its marble columns, while scarce a breath breaks the still scene, save the murmur of the fountain's spray, whispering soft music to the flowers bathed in its cool freshness! Oh! might not such a night as this have steeped in sweetness the doomed city ere it woke to sleep no more, save the sleep that knows no waking! Then again my fancy seemed to retrace its way—to behold the multitudes assembling for the bloody games so often witnessed in the very spot wherein we sat. From all parts they pour in: horsemen, pedestrians,

peasants in their gay holiday attire ; senators in their robes of office ; high-born women with their gorgeous jewels : all sweep as a living stream into the charmed circle. The seats are filled, tier above tier—a countless multitude ! The din is hushed—a strange wild cry is heard : every eye is turned to the dark caverns below. It is the lion's roar ! Another sound rises above the hum of voices—a flourish of trumpets proclaims the approach of the gladiators ; the arena is prepared ! A deep breathless hush lay like a spell on the assembled multitudes ! . . . Too vividly came the picture of horror—the touching description in Childe Harold of the dying gladiator seemed acted here. I turned from its fearful idea ; and startlingly the wild solitude and unbroken silence came upon me ! The breeze sighed through the ruined arches, among the walls glanced the noiseless lizard, the only living creature save ourselves ; the song of the bird came not there,—the freshness of nature alone breathed of life ;—in quiet and in stillness the green vines waved around ; whilst the eye rested on the dark and fearful mountain, with its mysterious sounds, and still smoking fiery summit, standing out against the warm bright sky, as though to remind one that *it* was the Angel of Death that had passed over and blighted this fair scene.

VESUVIUS.

1st November 1845.

o we have really been to the top of Vesuvius! made close acquaintance with the burning mountain, that wonder of one's childhood, that fell and terrible destroyer of cities, whose eventful history has so often excited and appalled the imagination in maturer years. I had always felt that the descriptions one reads of visits to this mountain were unsatisfactory, and did not enable me fully to realize it as an object, or as a scene. I do not wonder at this now. One has but to experience it to feel how impossible it is to convey to another an adequate idea of the sublime impression made upon the whole moral nature,—the heart, the imagination, the intellect. There is in it a mingling of fear, and yet of exultation—of awe, and yet of irresistible curiosity; and along with all this, a strange physical effect upon the nervous system, which makes you feel yourself in circumstances unlike any you have ever experienced before. So at least it was with me.

The task of ascending Vesuvius, in so far as the difficulty and fatigue are concerned, is lighter than I had anticipated.

Having been conveyed by railway to Resina, a village at the foot of the mountain, we proceeded to the establishment of a man named Salvatore, who is now—as was his father before him—a well-known traveller's guide on this expedition. He is a good specimen of his class, full of tales of wild adventure and thrilling interest connected with the mountain on which he may be said to spend his life; for he told us he is generally up and down twice in the twenty-four hours, sometimes much oftener. We found him exceedingly attentive and obliging, and though doubtless not unwilling to make a somewhat better bargain for himself with strangers than he would attempt with the more experienced, he is at any rate satisfied to abide by his agreement, which is more than can be said of many of his class; and we had every reason to rejoice that we had chosen him, instead of one from among the clamorous set who waylaid our steps as we approached the village.

Having procured a competent number of animals, consisting equally of small active ponies and mules, with their attendants, we mounted and commenced at once our ascent from Resina. The route led us by a tortuous and rugged mule-path, through vineyards and across open wastes covered with brambles, Spanish broom, and even at this late season gay with lovely flowers. A deep blue sky was above our heads, and a bright sun, whose hot rays were somewhat tempered by the fresh breeze that met us from the mountain. The first half mile of the way was well calculated to call forth associations in harmony with what we had in prospect. Beneath the lava on which we trod, and on which here and there the animals' feet rung with a hollow iron sound, lay the buried Herculaneum, that city over whose gorgeous temples, gay palaces, and once busy streets, the dread mountain poured

death and ruin in a single night. And now, though eighteen hundred years have passed away, its iron grasp still baffles the toil of man to relax. How strangely did the glad sunshine and beauty above contrast with the gloom and desolation we knew to reign below ! After following this path for about three quarters of an hour, we came in sight of what is called the Hermitage, some distance above us : once in reality what the name implies, now nothing more than a very dirty pott-house, used as a resting-place and rendezvous by the hundreds constantly ascending and descending the mountain. Here the character of the scene suddenly and completely changed ; for we came upon the margin of that stupendous sea of lava, which in 1822 descended from the summit in one unbroken torrent, spreading out to a mile in breadth, overwhelming houses and vineyards, and burning and burying for the second time the town of Torre del Grecco. The savage wildness and desolation of the scene that now lay before us nothing can surpass. The only way one can at all describe the appearance of this vast expanse of lava is to fancy a mighty river of that extent rushing down the side of a lofty mountain, and then imagine its tossing billows, its boiling eddies, its mad whirlpools, its rapid coursings round projecting rocks, all suddenly arrested, and changed in one moment into dark rusty iron, with all their fantastic wreaths and agitated shapes retained. This it required half an hour of slow and toilsome journeying to cross. The Hermitage stands on an elevated promontory projecting from the side of the mountain, and having a deep ravine on either side, so that it is safe at all times from the sweep of the lava, though in considerable risk of being toppled down from its airy site by the earthquake. Here it is usual for travellers to rest for a few minutes, and to refresh themselves, if so inclined, with the bread and fruit clamorously

offered for sale, and quaff a bottle of the delicious wine known by the name of "Hermitage," and which is the produce of the vineyards around the spot. Looking upwards from this place to the source of the lava-torrent we had crossed, it had the appearance of what was actually the case—of having risen up from the interior of the mountain in an immense liquid mass, boiled over the edge of the wide crater, at first in a comparatively narrow stream, but gradually spreading out on each side till it covered the whole plain below. As we ascended, however, we could distinctly trace the superior layers made by smaller and more recent eruptions, extending to a greater or less distance downwards, ere arrested by the cooling process of the atmosphere. About half an hour after leaving the Hermitage, as the animals could proceed no farther, we had to dismount, and pursue our ascent on foot. Here, when we reached the base of the abrupt cone, about four-fifths I should think of the whole height above the sea-level had been accomplished, and perhaps five or six hundred feet of almost perpendicular climbing remained. Most formidable was its aspect. It had the appearance of a gigantic wall of large scoriated cinders, loosely piled up on each other, similar to those one sees thrown out as the refuse of a forge or gas-work, but some of them huge rocks of many tons' weight. Up this steep breastwork we pursued our way, but less toilsomely than we could have anticipated, even the ladies making light of it; partly owing no doubt to the excitement of the occasion, and not a little to the able and willing assistance of the guides, who, with straps fastened over their shoulders, the ends of which were given us to hold, cheered on the flagging with their good-humoured merriment. The heat of the sun was not oppressive,—thanks to a very free and cooling circulation of air, which seemed constantly rushing

up in a peculiar way from below, probably occasioned by the heat of the volcano above, and thus reversing the usual law of mountain breezes. About half way up our attention was directed to a large basin-like ravine, which separates the two great peaks of Vesuvius, viz., that on which we were, and the lower, commonly called Monte Somma. This ravine is evidently the old and principal crater of the mountain, which at one time seems to have formed an unbroken cone. Out of this vast and gloomy caldron poured, most probably, that fiery ruin which devastated the ancient Pompeii and Herculaneum. After about forty-five minutes' breathless exertion, and not less breathless anticipation, we arrived at the top, and stood upon the verge of the recent crater of the mountain. It is a hollow circular space, apparently a thousand or twelve hundred yards from one outermost verge to the other. The sides of this basin are broken and unequal in height, and in one part filled up nearly as high as the brim with loose sand and stones. The rest of the wide space presents all, and even more of the gloomy grandeur my imagination had attributed to such a spectacle. On the side at which we entered—the lowest of the crater, and the one at which the eruption had last broken through, the same hard and black lava filled the basin to the edge. It covers an area of several acres, in huge tumultuous broken billows, sometimes piled one above the other; sometimes forming deep vortices; at others projected upwards in spiral cones: all as though arrested and consolidated while still in the violent action of boiling. There is a frightful and unrelieved blackness in the hue of it here, as though the unearthly fluid had come, as indeed it has, from the very regions of horror and darkness. All around the sides of the crater, and across the surface of this dark and undulating mass, we observed white and vapoury wreaths of smoke

curling up from narrow fissures, which are everywhere to be traced athwart the sombre surface by streaks of vivid yellow sulphur. About the middle of this vast basin of the old crater rises what is now the living and active crater, in the form of a cone about a hundred yards wide at the base, and perhaps half of that in height. From the summit of this rolls forth perpetually a volume of smoke, interrupted at intervals of five or ten minutes by explosions of ashes and red-hot stones. These fall within a limited range on the sides of the cone, so that it is quite safe to stand, as we did, close to its base. In order to get a nearer view of these explosions, several of which of considerable violence took place whilst we were on the spot, we crossed, carefully following our guides, over the cracked and heated surface of the intervening field of lava. So hot was it in many parts that it was quite uncomfortable to the feet, even causing the soles of our shoes to curl and shrink under us. In crossing the fissures, a stream of hot sulphurous air rushed up, sufficient to produce speedy suffocation if closely inhaled. While traversing this space one vividly and fearfully realizes the awful fact, that the cracked and hollow-sounding crust you tread on is all that supports you over the abyss, where but partially slumbers the dread volcano underneath. I cannot recollect any sensation of my life to compare with the mysterious dread I felt creep over me when one of the guides called my attention to an aperture about a foot in width, under an overhanging block of lava. From this issued forth a continued jet of living angry flame, accompanied by a hollow rumbling sound that seemed to come from far beneath, as it were the impatient voice of some mighty power speedily about to burst for itself a freer vent, through the frail crust that holds it confined. One feels that were that fiery column extinguished for an instant, the eye might

explore down its gloomy passage, deep into the wondrous world of fire beneath ! The very thought made one shudder and shrink back ! Just as we had reached and stationed ourselves at the base of the volcanic cone, a magnificent explosion took place. It was preceded, as usual, by a hollow rumbling sound that seemed to begin far beneath our level, rise rapidly to the top of the cone, and then burst forth, with a sound often compared to the firing of artillery, but I should think a much more apt comparison would be the bursting of an immense steam-boiler. A short and violent hissing noise succeeds, and then a vast quantity of red-hot stones and ashes are seen projected into the air, some of the former to the height of three hundred feet. The projecting force, notwithstanding some theories to the contrary, is evidently steam, not only from the appearance of the vapour that accompanies it, but still more from the shower of hot water which falls around, and the black muddy substance into which the ashes are formed. Of this, in fact, in a slimy and smoking state, the surface of the cone itself is formed. I saw masses of red-hot substance thrown out sufficient apparently to crush one, though it is said they are much lighter than their size would seem to indicate. Some travellers are foolhardy enough to ascend to the top, and look down into the fiery crater, but it is not easy to see how they can escape being injured by these explosions. The guide confessed, however, that it could not be done with safety while we were there, owing to the great frequency of the explosions. On retracing our steps to the outer verge, we passed through a remarkable hollow in the lava-crust, where it was thinner or more porous than elsewhere, for the sulphurous exhalations were so potent as to produce a sensation of faintness. We were glad to quicken our pace to the outer edge, and to meet the sweet and wholesome breeze wafted upwards

from the lovely plain beneath, and which, laden with a thousand perfumes and sensations of delight, seemed the very breath of heaven itself welcoming our return from a region of blackness and horror. And what a contrast was here to the sights and objects we had been contemplating! In all its own peculiar gladness, brilliancy, and golden sunshine, lay stretched beneath us the most beautiful and glorious prospect that perhaps the world can afford. The blue and sparkling Mediterranean on the one hand, on the other that magnificent plain, so well characterized, physically at least, by its truly Italian appellation—"Campagna Felice." Nothing can exceed the varied richness and picturesque objects of its wide-spreading surface. Stretching far as the eye can reach, it is interspersed with countless towns and villages, whose dazzling whiteness contrasts in the most gay and happy manner with the deep luxuriant evergreen of the orange groves around them. On several of the hills and uplands, the woods were still showing the yellow tints of autumn, and seemed, as it were, to disperse the light of the sun with a yet mellowed and richer radiance through the atmosphere. How often have we had occasion to remark that we must indeed see, ere we can conceive, the magic effect of light and colouring, which in this lovely climate the varying states of the atmosphere call forth in its landscapes! In the immediate foreground lay regal Naples—the syren city; her white arms extended as if to encircle the blue bay that seemed to sleep in calm loveliness on her bosom. Beyond, the picturesque outline of the coast, sweeping away in soft and graceful curves round the classic promontories of Puteoli, Baiæ, and Misenum, and finally losing itself in the ethereal haze of distance; the thousands of vessels of every size and form, resting like birds of snowy plumage on the water,—all

combine to form a scene in which detail is impossible, but of which the delightful impress will long continue deep in memory, with a power to soothe and elevate.

Every one knows there is but a step from the sublime to the ridiculous; and this every one must have experienced who has made the usual descent from Vesuvius.

The guides conducted us to a place where there was no lava or cinders, but only loose sand, in which the feet sank deep, and which yielded under the step. It is as nearly perpendicular as the place of ascent. The manner in which we set off, by the direction of the guides, who *must* have all done according to use and wont, was more like the act of casting one's-self headlong from a stupendous precipice than anything else; yet, in truth, it is the act of wisdom and of some degree of pleasure too. One has but to throw the feet forward, and the downward impetus of the body does the remainder of the work. The soft yielding sand completely breaks the shock. The fresh exhilarating air seems half to bear you on its wings. The sensation is one something between skating and flying; and while strength and breath endure, decidedly a pleasant one. This is the poetical part of the proceeding, to those who are actually engaged in this *Rasselas*-like adventure. But to an onlooker,—the foolish, frantic, headlong pace—the involuntary, but most lunatic-like gesticulation of arms and legs—the breezy fluttering of ladies' dresses, dishevelled hair, and bonnets with cracking strings straining to be left behind—the giant strides, streaming coat-tails, and clenched teeth of the sterner sex,—all laughing, shouting, leaping, and anon precipitated helplessly on each others' shoulders, forms a picture of the most unmingled absurdity.

We arrived—scarcely credible as it seemed on looking

upwards—in eight minutes, and in perfect safety, at the bottom, remounted the patient animals that were dutifully awaiting our descent, and in a short time regained the *Hermitage*. Here we took possession of a room small and forlorn enough certainly, for any hermit, spread out the contents of our provision basket, and made such a meal as our exertions had well prepared us for. In the cool of the evening, we had a delicious ride through the groves and vineyards which richly clothe the lower part of the mountain ; thus closely does the extreme of fertile beauty rise in strange contrast to that of dark and savage grandeur. We soon reached *Resina*, where, having discharged our bargain with *Salvatore* and his men, we proceeded to the Railway Station, and returned about nightfall to *Naples*.

We felt that evening, as we laid our weary limbs to repose, that we had spent one of the most interesting and memorable days in our lives ; one teeming with lessons of deep and impressive solemnity,—lessons of the awful power, yet wondrous grace of Him whose hand has formed alike these objects of terror and of beauty, whose long-suffering mercy to sinful man, still spreads the one for his enjoyment, and restrains the other from his destruction.

BAIÆ.



FEW days after our expedition to Vesuvius, we arranged with the R——s to visit the classic haunts of Baiæ and its neighbourhood. Ungaro furnished us with a comfortable roomy carriage, and the spirited little horses took us rapidly along the winding road which passes by the shores of Posilippo. This drive has been recently constructed by Government, principally for the sake of opening up the view from the different points on the coast. The old road between Naples and Pozzuoli, and that by which the ordinary traffic is still conducted, passes through the Grotto of Posilippo, a gigantic tunnel constructed at some unknown period of antiquity underneath the range of hills which separates Naples from the country to the north and west. As is usual in this excursion, we chose the new road in going to Baiæ, intending to return by the Grotto.

The islands of Capri, Nisida, Procida, Ischia—one after another—came into view like floating clouds of the most beautiful lilac, resting on an element whose colour and trans-

parency, in a still bright day, scarce distinguish it from the firmament above. When we reached the heights on the other side of Posilippo, the whole of the unrivalled Bay of Naples—the entire circle of its shores, marked by a chain of interesting objects—lay before us. To the far left, Massa—Sorrento—Castellamare—the site of Pompeii—Resina, erected on the buried Herculaneum—Torre del Grecco—Vesuvius, rising with its graceful sweep from the rich plains on either side—white towns and villages clustering round its base—Naples, with its castles, glittering streets, and gay villas—Pozzuoli at a little distance, with its deeply interesting associations, as the ancient Puteoli where Paul landed after his long and perilous voyage recorded in Acts. On the right were Baïæ and Misenum, their bays and promontories rich with the remains of ancient baths and temples. Truly one could not wish to look upon a panorama more gorgeous than that which was spread before us.

At Pozzuoli, we took as guide a very respectable-looking old man, who had served seven years in the English navy. He spoke English pretty fluently, and proved very intelligent. Placing ourselves entirely under his directions, we left the carriage at Pozzuoli, and set forward to visit the various objects in the neighbourhood, taking with us two donkeys to relieve the fatigue of the rough and difficult paths which led to them. Shortly after turning off the high-road we came in sight of Lake Avernus, lying in a secluded spot, and surrounded by brushwood. The sun's rays scarcely reach the lake, which, dark and gloomy as it looked in its deep recess, imagination lent her aid to make us think still more so. It has evidently been the crater of a long extinct volcano, and with its mysterious environs, is supposed to have been Virgil's conception of the entrance to the infernal regions. The idea one can

imagine to have been suggested by the death-like stillness of the lake itself, and the pestilential vapours that are said to hang around it. From this last characteristic has come the name Avernus, signifying "without birds," as the belief once existed (though the evidence of our eyes proved it groundless in the present day at all events), that birds could not fly across it, that they dropped down dead the moment they came within the influence of its noisome exhalations.

Passing by its shores we came to the Grotto of the Cumean Sybil. Our guides carried lighted torches, which glared luridly in the heavy darkness. One could not conceive a better preparation for credulous assent to the oracles of the Sybil, than this subterranean passage to her mysterious haunts. There was something to me peculiarly horrible as we groped onwards, in the blackness of darkness, on which the flaring of the torches made an impression sufficient only to render it more oppressive, and to cast a pallid hue on the features of those around. The smell, too, is suffocating; and right glad were we all to breathe the sweet pure air again. Mounting our donkeys, S—— and I led the way along a narrow footpath, up and down steep declivities, between shrubs of myrtle, tamarind, arbutus, and lavender, with a fringe of cyclamen, antirrhinum, larkspur, and many other gay flowers. Passing a picturesque little sheet of water, Lake Lucrinus, with a sunny cheerful aspect, a pleasing contrast to Avernus, we went on to Lake Acheron. At one side is the Mare Morto, or fabled Styx, the situation of which is as confidently pointed out by the guides, as though they were in the daily practice of conducting travellers to Charon's ferry. The whole of this neighbourhood is evidently but a thin crust over volcanic fire. Every now and then we came upon some rocky fissure, whence issued misty wreaths of smoke, whilst the air felt oppressive and

heavy. After a regular scramble at the termination of the path, we came upon the road to Baiæ, lying between high rocks, and revealing one of the loveliest peeps of the bay. To add to the picture, a party of peasants, driving asses laden with sticks, met us,—the women wearing the flat square white handkerchiefs, with which paintings of Italian scenes make one so familiar. S—— and I stopped to sketch, and the women gathered round us, laughing and talking, and using every means of persuasion to induce us to bestow a few *grani*. Flattery, too, was administered in large doses, in a style both novel and annoying, yet withal so shrewd and absurd, we could not long resist them, and laughing truly more at ourselves than at them—for they at least had gained their object—we gave them each a trifle and joined our party.

Again were we induced to enter a horrible subterranean place, though both S—— and I had declared that nothing should prevail on us to encounter the stifling and other disagreeable sensations attending a descent into these underground regions, and verily the additional horrors of the “Cento Camerette,” or cells in which the victims of Nero’s cruelty were confined, might well cause us to regret our having yielded to curiosity or persuasion. To think of human beings occupying such places, perhaps for months! How humiliating it is to witness the atrocious cruelty to which the indulgence of uncontrolled passions will lead the heart of man! Our worthy guide amused us by the indignant surprise he expressed at our positive refusal to penetrate into the innermost cells, adding, “Vy you pay de money, den? vy you no see everyting?” He was, however, better satisfied with our admiration of the “Piscina Mirabile,” near the ruins of the Villa of Lucullus. It is an enormous reservoir, constructed by Nero for the supply of water for his fleet when anchored in the

bay. It is a perfect labyrinth of pillars, piers, and arches, and a very slight effort of imagination might well make one fancy it a rude cathedral under ground. The graceful celandine forms a carpet of loveliest green, and clothes the rude arches with festoons, while the cool deep shade was most refreshing after the broiling heat of the mid-day sun. Leaving the Piscina Mirabile, a few minutes' walk brought us to the locality of the so-called Elysian Fields,—now a tangled wilderness, yet elysian certainly, as far as the most exquisite view could make it so. On this we feasted our eyes, while a feast of a more substantial kind was being prepared in the arcade of a neighbouring cottage, in which, sheltered from the sun, we could inhale the sweet breath of the orange groves which closed it in on one side. Alas! what a change awaited us on passing through the cottage to the outer side, where the carriage had been sent to meet us. In one moment we were besieged, and by such a troop as baffles description, from the grey-haired screeching hag to the lisping urchin, clambering up the very wheels and sides of the carriage. I gave a biscuit I had in my hand to a black-eyed rogue, who had succeeded in gaining the top of the wheel near me, and whose handsome face and saucy smile proved irresistible. It was a signal for a general rush on the fortunate possessor, and our ears tingled with the shout which burst forth as they set upon him, ready to tear him in pieces. His prize was seized; but, nothing daunted, he was by my side in a second, pointing to his lost treasure, with a piteous look, yet seemingly sure of again prevailing. By this time we had the whole remaining contents of the basket ready to scatter amongst them, though I still contrived to secure a goodly piece for my little rogue. Adding a few *grani*, we drove off at full speed, as the only means of ridding us of their most unpleasant propinquity.

At Baiæ we visited the interesting remains of the Temples of Venus, Mercury, and Diana. Their size is prodigious, and the beauty of the designs, in that of Mercury especially, is very great. Between Baiæ and Pozzuoli are Nero's Baths, underneath the ruins of his Villa. At the end of long corridors are the boiling springs, the steam from which so heats the passages that one can scarce advance two steps without becoming quite breathless. To show off the boiling power of the springs, three or four eggs were put into a pail and let down into the water, and in two minutes they were cooked.


Arrived once more at Pozzuoli, we went to the magnificent Temple of Jupiter Serapis. Even what remains of this stupendous edifice suffices to show how vastly it must have surpassed in size, beauty, and design almost any building of modern days. The shafts of the three columns that still stand are each one solid piece of cipollina, and the pavement, wherever the sea-water and mud which cover the floor allow it to be seen, is of the rarest marble. Scarcely were we able to do justice to all that was worth seeing, for, by the time we had got through what I have described, we each admitted our excessive fatigue, and dismissing the guide, gladly took our seats in the carriage, giving ourselves up to the enjoyment of a delicious drive.

In silence we watched the glorious sunset, and the short twilight that followed the sinking of the golden day. For a brief moment a darker purple deepened on the sky, and a thousand rose hues slept on the water: another moment of shade half victorious over light, and then the moon shone forth in her beauty, and night resumed her reign. It was late when we passed through the Grotto of Posilippo, but this only enhanced the wonders of the vast and gloomy passage, dimly lighted as it is both by day and night with lamps,

at long intervals. The unknown origin of this subterranean road greatly helps the imagination in the enjoyment of its strange and awful impressions; and as I looked into its recesses on either hand, and upwards where its lofty roof was lost in darkness, I felt inclined, with Mr. Beckford, devoutly to believe it the creation of the mysterious race of the Cimmeræus!

The Tomb of Virgil, which is upon the rocky eminence immediately above the entrance of this Grotto, we visited another day. It is a sweet sequestered spot, and, whether he was really buried there or not, seems a fitting resting-place for the great poet. A kind of hanging garden, or more properly a vineyard, surrounds the tomb; a little narrow path leads you zig-zag up the precipice, and when at length you reach the top, you find bay and chestnut trees hanging over the ruins of what appears to have been once rather an elaborate monument, though in what style of art little or nothing remains to tell. Above it is a little terrace, from whence is one of the best views of Naples. The hum from the busy town far below falls with a softened murmur on the ear, which soothes rather than disturbs the musing of the mind. In coming down we peeped, through a side aperture near the steps, into the dark gloomy Grotto. The long and solemn perspective terminates in a mere speck of grey light at the far end, across which the diminutive figures of human beings, passing and repassing, seemed like objects seen through an inverted telescope.

HERCULANEUM.

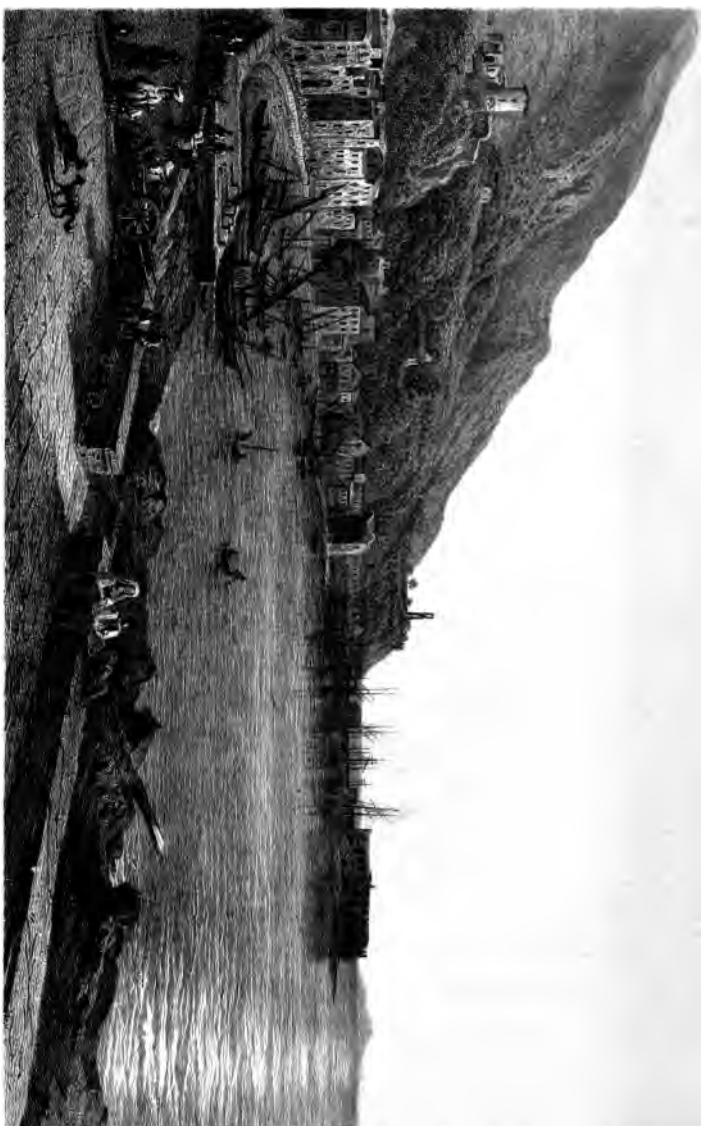
AVING, through the kindness of Mr. Temple, the British representative at the Neapolitan Court, obtained permission to wander about the streets of Pompeii without the irksome attendance of the custode, and so made ourselves pretty well acquainted with its principal details, we next wished to see Herculaneum, and proposed to S—— R—— to accompany us thither. A beautiful day as usual brightening all around, we passed through Portici, on our way to Herculaneum. Though considerably larger in extent than I had anticipated, this disintombed city is not at first sight so impressive as Pompeii. But I must confess that when we had descended the flight of steps, and actually reached the excavated buildings, the feeling of awe, almost of fear, with which one looked at the immense walls of lava still holding fast the remainder of a city of yet unknown dimensions, was even greater than at Pompeii. There is, it seemed to me, in Herculaneum, what I was so much struck with the *absence* of at Pompeii, an air of gloomy desolation

and ruin about the houses and the streets. They are so partially disclosed, and seem so shut in by their gloomy barriers, that one finds it difficult to realize their ever having been inhabited by living, acting beings like ourselves; whereas I often felt at Pompeii, as though I was intruding into the midst of domestic circles, or scenes of actual business and pleasure. The most remarkable part of Herculaneum is the theatre: it was in this spot that the well was sunk which led to the discovery of the city more than a century ago. With a sensation of mysterious awe, we commenced the descent into this still buried theatre. By the light of many torches we proceeded down the flight of steps which brought us at last into some of the uppermost galleries around the building. Still descending, we reached the consular seats, the orchestra, and the stage. It was strange to know one's self eighty-seven feet below the surface of the ground, and yet in the very midst of a place which once was filled with the sun's bright rays, where once were heard the sounds of music and of mirth, where thousands were assembled amid those glorious works of art which are now deemed unrivalled! Magnificent statues and bronzes were found here and removed to the Museum. The noble equestrian statues of the Balbi family were taken from the niches around this very theatre. Certainly I returned from those dark subterranean memorials of the past, with a yet more fearful idea of the terrific devastation wrought by the mountain than anything else had given me.

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CASTELLAMARE.



CASTELLAMARE AND SORRENTO.



LOVE to dwell on the remembrance of the pleasant excursion, shared with our dear friends, to Castellamare and Sorrento. Nothing enhances more the enjoyment of such expeditions than the companionship of those we love, and who are ready to enter into, and share all our feelings.

The morning was somewhat grey and uncertain, but became more promising by the time we reached Castellamare. At the Railway Station we found the usual tormenting assemblage of ragged urchins, who insisted on snatching up every portable article, even attempting to seize on sketch-books and maps, too precious to be intrusted to such hands, in the hope of obtaining some "grani," assuring us they would "mangiar macaroni." As we had no doubt of their powers in that line, we did not test them, and selecting a tolerably decent-looking carriage with three capital horses, we jumped in and escaped from the garlic-scented mob around !

The situation of Castellamare is charming,—built along

the shore at the foot of richly-wooded hills. Those villas embowered amid groves on the terraces above the town must be delicious retreats for repose and coolness, in the summer months, from the shadeless streets of Naples. So lovely was the view of a projecting promontory, so soft and glowing the light upon the water, so tempting the picturesque combination of lateen-sailed boats, groups of peasants, in short of everything to be desired in a characteristic sketch, that we prevailed on the gentlemen to allow us a few minutes in which to take a sketch, which might recall each feature of that sunlit scene.

The little town of Vico is boldly situated on the verge of lofty cliffs overhanging the sea. Passing it, the road shortly afterwards winds down the side of a vast ravine opening to the Bay. The torrent which rushes at the bottom of it, is spanned by a lofty bridge with a double tier of arches, one above the other. On reaching the level on the opposite side, we found ourselves on the verge of that large plain called the "Piano di Sorrento," famed both in ancient and modern times, for its teeming fruitfulness. It is bounded on the north and east by an amphitheatre of sheltering mountains, and opens, to the sunny south and west, upon the sea; yet, unlike most plains so situated, it is far above the sea-level, terminating abruptly in a line of rocky precipice all along the coast. The long heaving swell, which in the calmest weather is never absent from these shores, breaking upon the bold rocks, and rushing impetuously into their numberless indentations, occasions continually a streak of white and sparkling foam, which, floating a little way out from the rocks in an unbroken line, has a most singular appearance from a distance. There was one peculiar feature of this favoured plain which at once struck us,—the extent and richness of the

orange and lemon groves: their abundant produce in every stage of progress, from the fragrant blossom to the golden fruit. Turn where you will, their dark and glossy foliage meets the eye in every enclosure, overhanging every wall, filling every crevice. In the higher parts and more open space, they contrast well with the vine, olive, walnut, pomegranate, chestnut, and acacia; while here and there—not the least pleasing objects amid the luxuriant offspring of this fruitful soil, were to be seen noble specimens of the oak of Old England, thrusting forth their gnarled limbs in strong and sturdy independence, and suggesting thoughts of home and friends amid a land of strangers. And now that I have dwelt on the loveliness cast in rich profusion by the hand of Nature all around, I must mention the grievous disappointment one feels on approaching Sorrento, and passing through the finest part of the Piano. One drives in the midst of such beauties for miles, with scarce a glimpse of them! The way lies along deep sunk lanes, with walls on either side so close as scarcely to admit of two carriages passing, and never less than seven or eight, and often twelve or fourteen feet high. Damp, dark, and dismal are these provoking walls, green with slimy weeds, suggesting the idea of long dreary passages to a cellar. Neither is this only here and there; but in every direction the Piano is intersected with these abominable lanes, to the total discomfiture of the traveller's view, temper, and enjoyment. Nor can the sojourner in this neighbourhood appreciate its delights, save by escaping from it to the mountains on the one hand, or the sea-shore on the other.

In the "Hôtel des Sirènes, which Ungaro recommended to us, we forgot our disappointment. It stands in one of the large orange groves, surrounded with roses and gay flowers, and quite overhanging the sea at a considerable height above

it. Our rooms were cheerful and pretty : the whole expanse of sea and land, on either side, lay before us, and the deep sea dashed upon the rocks directly below the balcony on which we stood. As soon as we had arranged matters in the hotel, and ordered dinner to be ready on our return, we mounted donkeys and ponies, and set off upon an excursion to St. Agata, in the mountains. The ponies were remarkably handsome spirited little things, especially one which the guides called Zuccherine. A lady's saddle having been put on him, S—— and I determined to ride by turns. It would have astonished some of our good friends at home, could they have seen us rushing full speed up a long flight of stone steps. The pace was a succession of short leaps rather than a gallop ; a most peculiar motion, but on the active little animal I rode, not unpleasant. We laughed right merrily, as we dashed recklessly on, the guides shouting as they kept close behind. Stopping a good way up this extraordinary bridlepath, we dismounted to go in search of a certain point of view which lay a little to the right. A few hundred yards brought us to the top of a wild breezy hill, and the prospect which greeted us was magnificent. The day became again overcast, but as rain was not anticipated, we continued our route to St. Agata. On returning to the steeds, S—— took her turn to mount Zuccherine, while I got upon her donkey. Away we went on a road that seemed by no means smooth or easy, until one learned to think it so by contrast. In a few minutes Mr. R——, who was first, was directed to turn to the right, up a place which, even after our past experience, seemed perfectly inaccessible. Such sliding, such scrambling commenced, and yet upwards we certainly progressed ! And now our path lay in the narrow bed of a mountain torrent, at this season dried up, where Mr. R—— adopted the wise precaution of taking

his feet out of the stirrups. Scarcely had he done so before it became evident that our donkeys considered themselves in the light of this torrent, or at least as its fair-weather substitute, for down they lay ! This might be agreeable to them, but certainly by no means so to their riders. Joking apart, both Mr. R—— and I were at one time in danger of being seriously hurt ; and had he not previously drawn up his feet, they must have been crushed against the sharp jagged rocks. As it was, I did not altogether escape, my donkey's reclining propensity occasioning me a sprained ankle, though fortunately the damage was but slight. The guides persuaded us to mount again, but the first step brought my stupid animal to the ground ; so it was agreed to trust to our own powers of climbing, W—— and S—— continuing the ascent with the sure-footed ponies. We learned afterwards, indeed, that it is not safe to take donkeys into these steep places, as they have not strength or suppleness sufficient to drag themselves and their riders up. Certainly, after our experience, it was rather amusing to recall the epithet of the master of the hotel when we inquired about what steeds he had, “ Ah ! des *superbes ânes* ! ” After all, we were little repaid for this last toilsome part of the way ; a heavy black cloud obscured the view, and the wind became piercingly cold at the height we had reached.


We hastened to descend, but before much of the way had been accomplished, a storm of heavy rain came on. We took shelter in a house in the village of St. Agata. A civil woman gave us the best room she had, presenting us with oranges for our refreshment, and we amused ourselves with watching the process of silk-spinning in which she was engaged. The rain ceased ere long, and we set forth ; the paths were very steep and slippery, so that most of the party walked, occa-

sionally enjoying for variety a good tumble down. As soon as it was safe to do so, I got on little Zuccherine, who took me down famously, stepping down the stairs as cautiously as though he knew all about it, and wished to show his biped companions how they should proceed.

A most pleasant evening closed the day. S—— and I completed several sketches, and then we drew round a wood-fire, which cheerily blazed on the hearth, and many a tale was told ere we were willing to allow that repose was needful after the fatigues of the day.

The weather was dull and cloudy in the morning, so we started early on our return to Naples. A heavy rain came on within an hour, accompanying us all the way, and preventing the possibility of seeing anything more. We therefore got into the first railway train at Castellamare, reaching Naples early in the afternoon.

LAGO D'AGNANO AND THE SOLFATARA.

E assembled on New-Year's Day—and as bright and glorious a one as ever shone—a little party, in excellent spirits, for an expedition to the Lago d'Agnano and the Solfatara. Mrs. C—— kindly lent us her carriage, her son accompanying us, and Mr. D——, a clerical friend of W——'s. The beautiful road to Baiæ was familiar to us all; but ere long we turned off, and soon found ourselves at the Lago d'Agnano.

The little sheet of water is circled with low swelling hills, thickly covered with brushwood. On the side of one of these hills are the remains of a villa, which belonged to Lucullus, who connected this lake with the sea by a canal still traceable, making the lake a reservoir for fish. We did not explore the ruins of the villa, being (alas for antiquarian taste!) more curious to see the Grotto del Cane, the account of whose wonders ranks among the recollections of my earliest literary acquisitions. In the same thick red book, whose pages were adorned with a picture of the leaning Tower of Pisa, was another, representing the mysterious Grotto del

Cane. At the entrance, I recollect there is also depicted a man holding the stiffened form of a wretched dog, looking like a drowned cat. Such as it was, however, it made a vivid impression on my imagination. The reality is a miserable hole shut in with a wooden door. Two very flourishing dogs accompanied the man who shows it, to the door ; but not even the picture in the red book could overcome my distaste to the proposed exhibition, viz., rendering the poor animals insensible by forcing them to inhale a noxious gas. I must own the dogs seemed positively disappointed by our tenderness, which was explained by the fact, that when all is over they are fed with some dainty, by way of satisfaction to their injured feelings ! We, however, saw lighted torches in an instant extinguished on being plunged into the heavy gas, which lies in a stratum not more than eighteen inches deep upon the floor of the little cave. The smoke rested upon the invisible gas, as upon water, producing an extraordinary effect. From this Grotto we were taken to another close by. The man asked me if I would have a glass of champagne. Though of course suspecting a joke, I assented ; and stooping down as directed, and gently waving my hand towards my face, immediately felt a sharp stimulating sensation in my mouth and throat, exactly like the effect of drinking a glass of effervescing liquid. The guide then made me descend still lower and repeat the same motion, which I did, but too quickly, and the consequence was the exquisitely painful sensation produced by smelling sal ammoniac, from which it in reality here proceeds.

Having seen everything worthy of notice, we returned to the carriage, and passing through a wild pretty lane, reached again the high road to Baiæ. At Pozzuoli we engaged the services of a civil-looking man and a sensible-looking donkey,

and set off for the Solfatara. I can scarcely say what I had expected to find at this place, but certainly nothing so strange, I may almost say awful, as the reality. A vast hollow crater, its sides here and there decked with low brushwood, but elsewhere bare and almost ghastly, yawned before us. The surface of the ground was everywhere thickly strewed with the debris of pumice-stone, and yellow with crystallized sulphur. When we had passed about half-way across the interior of the crater, a hollow sound, somewhat resembling the explosion of a subterranean mine, arrested our steps. The earth sensibly trembled beneath our feet, and I must confess my feelings were not of wonder only, when the guide pointed out a lad at a little distance who was throwing down a heavy stone with all his might, from which simple act proceeded this tremendous result. It did indeed enable us to realize the dreadful abyss below, over which this crust of sulphuric lava alone supported us. A few feet from where we stood, an aperture was visible, from whence volumes of light vapoury smoke issued ; and a piece of paper, attached to a rod, which J—— C—— thrust a little way into it, was drawn out in flames. All round this spot the ground was quite sensibly hot to the feet. It was strange to observe the effect of the sun's rays on the crystallized sulphur which covered every object. At a distance the universal yellow colour was ghastly, but on a nearer approach, each little yellow stone, stunted shrub, and bare rock, were changed, as by a fairy touch, into sparkling beauty, reflecting a thousand prismatic hues, and relieving by this magic splendour much of the associated terror of the place. J—— C—— and the guide diligently employed themselves in collecting for us specimens of these sulphurs, formed on loose pieces of lava, of every variety of colour ; but, "like the snow-flake on the river,

one moment seen, then gone for ever," we had little more than time to admire their sparkling radiance, ere it had vanished. Some few, however, which we took home, retained the crystals in a slight degree.

This nearly extinguished crater is called the "Pulse of Vesuvius;" and though twelve or fifteen miles distant, is supposed to be connected with the latter in its action. Common report says, that when the Solfatara shows its ordinary signs of life, Vesuvius may be considered quiescent; but that when these cease, the mountain may be considered dangerous. This volcano is also thought to have been active before any such appearance had been observed in Vesuvius. Whether this be the case or not it is difficult to say, as there does not seem any sufficient ground for fixing the comparative date of either, if we except what the guides told us, viz., that some late excavations in the neighbourhood of the Solfatara have brought to light relics which are ascribed to an era more remote than any connected with discoveries in these parts; while some believe that there is good ground for the assertion, that a city, unknown even by name, is still lying buried within the once fatal range of the Solfatara.

I have dwelt more upon the natural beauties of Naples and its environs than upon the works of art; for though not devoid of the latter, assuredly to the stranger the former are more striking and attractive. With the churches in Naples I was generally greatly disappointed,—gaudy finery and bad taste being their distinguishing features; while the ceremonies of the Church, as observed there, seem to me to be devoid of even the semblance of devotion. I cannot conceive any human being finding even outward attraction in any of them. For instance, on the most solemn occasion of Neapo-

litan observance, the liquefying of the blood of St. Gennaro, as far as we could ascertain, nothing but the most absurd charlatanry was exhibited. Finding that he could not witness this famous ceremony without in appearance joining with the admiring crowd who knelt around, W—— would not gratify his curiosity ; but we heard enough from a gentleman who had been present, to make us doubt whether even the priests themselves are self-deceived ; while the deluded people, though professing great anxiety to obtain this mark of the approbation, or continued protection, of their patron saint, were yet jabbering, laughing, and grimacing among themselves, without anything like seriousness.

Many of the priests here seem to be from the ranks of the common people, and to be regarded with little reverence. In short, as far as our very slight opportunities of judging may enable us to form an opinion, I should say that the Neapolitans of the lower classes have, from some reason or other, very little respect indeed either for their priests or their Church.

But to pass from a subject on which I admit myself to be little competent to enter, let me notice a few works of art in Naples, which, whatever the outdoor attractions of this bright region, cannot be passed over by any who appreciate the productions of genius.

In the Capella di St. Severo, a small chapel attached to one of the palaces near the Toledo, are three pieces of sculpture of a remarkable character. The first is a statue of Modesty, by Corradini, veiled from head to foot, while yet the fair and feminine features are distinctly visible through the gauzelike texture of the veil : it is not only curious as a work of art, but beautiful in itself. The second is termed “Vice undeceived.” The idea is represented by the figure of

a man struggling in the meshes of a strong net, in which he seems hopelessly entangled, but from which he is endeavouring to free himself by the aid of the Genius of Good Sense, a female figure standing near him. The third is alike peculiar, and much more affecting: a figure of our Lord extended on a bier, covered with a linen cloth, through which the features, stamped with the impress of death, are plainly revealed. The sculptor was San Martino.

I almost regret not having written down some impressions of what I saw in the Museum, to which I made many visits, often of hours at a time; but it seemed so far beyond my powers to do justice to the numberless objects of interest there assembled, that I foolishly left it wholly undone. And now that I have seen it for the last time, I am compelled hastily to jot down the names of some three or four, which after all, are precisely those I am least likely to forget. In the second division of the Gallery of Sculpture are the famous equestrian statues of the Balbi family, brought from the Theatre of Herculaneum; but noble as they are, they excited in me none of the deep interest called forth as I stood before the half reclining figure of Agrippina, the mother of Nero. The deep nerveless despair expressed in every line of that form, as well as in the lineaments of the face, is a masterpiece of sculpture. It moves one with the very pathos of a picture; nay, few are the paintings which could even equal the power of such sculpture as this. I could fancy that stern Roman matron to have just learnt the cruel decree of her unnatural son,—her knowledge of his ferocious nature causing her at once to feel that her doom was sealed;—while dim and afar off she sees the hour when he lay a helpless infant in her arms! It matters not that one has had but little sympathy with that woman's life and history. She is

there a mother with a mother's anguish, condemned to die by the son whom she bore !


Among the busts is an Aristides, which I thought one of the finest in the gallery. The Venus of Praxiteles, the rival of the Medici, is unquestionably very beautiful, yet I hope I shall admire more the Venus at Florence, or I shall not be fully satisfied. The far-famed Toro Farnese is a splendid colossal group ; but though I would not underrate it by any means, it is not of the kind I much admire. Even in this cursory glance, I must not pass by the exquisite collection of bronzes, Etruscan vases, and miscellaneous treasures brought from Pompeii and Herculaneum. Days might well be spent among them : the classic forms of many, even of the commonest articles in domestic use, seem to tell of a time when taste, and the perception of the beautiful, more generally imbued men's minds than now. The lamps especially I admired exceedingly. But I must not linger even in this most fascinating portion of the galleries ; neither among those bracelets, rings, and brooches, which showed the fair Pompeians to have been as fully possessed by the female love of jewels and ornaments as any lady of the nineteenth century, with the advantage—shall I venture to say it ?—of a purer taste !

In the picture department, which, as a collection, is a secondary one, I was pleased with a portrait of Christopher Columbus, by Parmegiano. The eye is clear and penetrating, the brow calm and thoughtful, the whole face in keeping with the character drawn by the hand of Washington Irving, in which the touching details of the long-tried patience and many misfortunes of this noble man excite the deepest interest in all connected with him.

The two Correggios, the Madonna di Coniglia, and the

Marriage of St. Catherine, are well known. Domenichino's "Angelo Custode" is a lively subject, well treated. The Madonna and Infant Saviour, one of Raphael's early paintings, is full of the tender softness and purity for which his earliest style is so remarkable. The St. John, by Leonardo da Vinci, completes the number of the pictures which particularly interested me.

PÆSTUM.

NE of the objects of deepest interest to me has long been the beautiful ruins of Pæstum. Many obstacles came in the way, and I had almost given up the hope of ever seeing them, when, quite unexpectedly, an opportunity offered for my accompanying some friends thither. The day dawned bright and beautiful, and shortly after eight o'clock we proceeded to the railway. As far as Pompeii, the country through which we passed was familiar, but from thence to Nocera was new. At Nocera we left the railway, and engaged a carriage to take us to Salerno, and next day to Pæstum. The town of Nocera, formerly Nuceria, is very ancient. It was destroyed by Hannibal, and partially rebuilt not long after. From thence to La Cava the country is very rich and beautiful. La Cava is a quaint old town, situated among hanging woods and deep ravines, encircled with mountains of every form and outline. The glimpses of the deep blue sea here and there, prepared one for the glorious scene which bursts upon the eye when the full view of the Bay of Salerno is revealed. It

was a lovely evening. The distant outlines stood clear and distinct against the brilliant hues of sunset : sky, earth, and sea flushed with the richest rose colour, which gradually softened and darkened into that peculiar deep lilac which is so lively. “Bella Italia!” how utterly does every attempt to describe thee fail! Nothing but memory can give back even for a moment those scenes of loveliness.

The evening passed quickly away at the Vittoria Hotel, in Salerno, and I completed several of my sketches. I was commissioned to arouse the party next morning, as we proposed starting very early. There certainly was little fear of my neglecting this, as I was far too much on the *qui vive*, and too full of anticipation to sleep soundly. The morning was fresh and clear, and we were in the carriage by five o'clock. I was surprised, as daylight dawned, to see the fine scenery through which we were passing, having always imagined the only attraction of Pæstum to be the Temples. But the chain of mountains, the wooded slopes, and picturesque clumps of trees in the plains would have been beautiful anywhere. By nine o'clock we reached the Silarius, a rapid stream, which we had to cross by a most primitive kind of ferry, and very soon were near enough to catch a view of the Temples. I had heard so much of the beauty of the first sight of them from the sea, that I expected the same from the road, and must confess I thought it less imposing than imagination had pictured; probably from the flatness of the plain, and the luxuriance of the brushwood with which it is overgrown. But if compelled for a passing moment to own that the reality had fallen short of anticipation, I was perhaps all the more impressed when we actually arrived, and they stood before us in their majestic beauty. The nearest to the road, and the smallest of the Temples, is that of Ceres, supposed to

be of somewhat later date than the others. The Temple of Neptune and the Basilica are at some distance, and stand close together. The walls of the ancient city can easily be traced by the fragments of them still remaining. Besides evident vestiges of a theatre or amphitheatre, there are several other portions of ruined buildings belonging to an equally remote age. One gateway is standing,—a noble arch of massive stone. On the keystone a female figure is distinctly visible, holding a rose.

What a panorama of interest and beauty is before you on entering the plain itself! The exquisite proportions of the Temples, the rich warm tints which the hand of Time has stamped upon them, as they stand out in bold relief against the clear sky; the blue sea in the distance, and the chain of mountains almost as blue—the same sea, the same mountains that looked on them in their early beauty, still adding charms to the venerable majesty of their decay. The scene itself, with the strange wild figures that cluster in groups around, clad in their undressed buffalo skins,—is all so wild and striking, it scarcely needs the yet deeper interest of the most remote antiquity and classic associations. The solitary stillness which reigns around is entirely in keeping with all this, and I mentally resolved, *coute qui coute*, to secure as much as possible the enjoyment of it.

As we left the carriage, we were as usual followed by a whole troop of men, women, and children,—all whining, begging, and howling,—till I was fairly distracted. In vain I appealed to my companions,—could nothing be done? *Patience* was the remedy suggested, and truly it was greatly needed. However, I resolved on trying some more active measure, and, stopping abruptly, mustered my worst Italian and best Neapolitan, and in a decided voice announced to the

rabble, that not one who advanced a single step farther, or uttered another word, should have anything—not a scrap from our basket—"non un grano." The effect was electrical. There was a pause: and I will not say that my heart did not beat quicker as I met the flashing eyes of those wild-looking men, some of them probably but lately bandits; but I steadily repeated my declaration, adding, that if they would quietly go away now, they should all have something before our departure. Just as one has seen a herd of deer turn rapidly round and run off, stopping at some distance to take a look, so the whole troop took themselves off, leaving us in peace. I was not a little pleased at my success, on which my companions also cordially congratulated me.

Taking my sketch-book, I left the rest of the party, and intensely did I enjoy that solitary ramble. Sitting down on a broken marble pedestal, I amused myself with creating in my mind pictures of the past.

I doubt not that every one who has spent an hour in these deserted plains has felt an influence on the mind, leading it to dream of bygone ages, and insensibly to mingle the objects on which the eye now rests, with associations of times and beings that once gave them life. As I sat there—with the tangled brake and untrained vine around—I saw the fair city with its palaces, the fallen altars raised, the streets busy; the occupation—the familiar scenes of life—enlivening the now silent solitude. But even when brightest, a dark shadow passes over the pictured scene—the shadow of the tomb!—filling the mind with awe, as it realizes the millions and millions of human beings, who, since the creation of these mighty Temples, have passed away, and are to us as though they had never been. Generation after generation has come and gone—mingled with the dust—and yet each rolling age.

as it passed onwards, has left these Temples even as it found them ! Visited in the days of Cæsar Augustus for their wonderful antiquity, there they stand in their stern and solitary brotherhood unscathed by Time—alone defying that power which has triumphed over all beside : sole links, as it were, with ages so entirely passed away, as to have left no other trace behind ! . How forcibly do the words of Scripture come to remembrance, “ As for man his days are like the grass : as a flower of the field so he flourisheth ; for the wind passeth over it and it is gone, and the place thereof knoweth it no more for ever.”

Very unwillingly I was at length obliged to obey a summons to partake of the contents of our basket, which I found spread out on the green turf, within the Temple of Neptune ; our seats were some of the broken pedestals which lay around ! Having finished our repast in this memorable banquet-hall, we summoned the whole troop of beggars from about the little hostelry, and divided among them the remaining contents of the basket. How I longed to be able to sketch the group as they crowded round us ! What pictures they would have made, with their fine guerilla faces, large flashing eyes, dark brown limbs and picturesque dress. The women were for the most part very striking in appearance ; their eyes generally superb ; the short skirts of their dresses hung in tatters to the knee ; and all had either white or scarlet handkerchiefs put square upon the head, from underneath which their long hair appeared, bound in smooth braids or gathered in knots behind.

While standing not far from the Temple, a delicious fragrance was borne to me on the breeze, whence proceeding I knew not ; but ere long, as I was crossing a part of the plain off the more beaten track, I came to such a quantity

of violets, so purely, darkly blue, that their ~~reflected hue~~ **reflected hue** was shed all around,—reminding me of a scene in my childhood, far away indeed, yet brought back with strange distinctness at that moment—the woods at Stoke Park, the swelling banks of Barn Wood in spring, when the deep blue of the wild hyacinth cast a mantle of the loveliest colour all around. Never, since the time I last looked on these, have I beheld anything like this spot in the plains of Pæstum. How little I then dreamed of the scene that would next recall those woods with all their associations to my mind !

I was so fortunate as to discover, whilst taking up a root I wished to carry away with me, a small terra-cotta head—a *bona fide* antique—which I shall ever greatly prize.

The hour for our departure came but too soon. The carriage was again surrounded by the eager claimants of our promised reward, and we drove off, showering among them handfuls of the small coins with which we were purposely provided. I stood up in the carriage and watched the Temples as they became more and more indistinct ; and vividly will their remembrance live in my memory long, long after I shall have left the land where they are.

Our homeward drive was lighted by the crimson hues of the evening sky, and one of the most glorious sunsets I have yet seen. We reached the Vittoria, in Salerno, soon after eight o'clock, and retired early to rest, to fit ourselves for next day's excursion to Amalfi.

AMALFI.



AGAIN the sun shone brightly upon us as we rode through the streets of Salerno, and wound our way along a narrow footpath cut in the face of almost perpendicular cliffs. It was now and then precipitous enough to make me feel giddy, and I was at times obliged to look away, and leave my mule to its own devices. Every feeling of awe, however, is completely relieved by the soft and witching beauty of earth and sky, which there, and on that delicious day, blended together so as to form a scene such as the most creative and poetic imagination must actually behold ere it can conceive.

What principally distinguishes the Bay of Salerno from that of Naples, of which it is the acknowledged rival, is, that instead of the sloping shores, innumerable indentations, and softly sweeping promontories of the latter, Salerno is one grand, almost unbroken circle, of which the background nearly of the whole circuit is the maritime branch of the gigantic Apennines, whose sunny peaks in the far inland,


tower in dazzling relief into the clear blue ether, as distinct and sharp in outline as if within half a mile. Their nearer branches come down abruptly upon the sea, and circle round the calm sleeping waters of this lovely bay, with a barrier of volcanic cliffs of the most fantastic forms. They give one the idea of detached mountains lifted from their bases, and piled one against another ; so that one feels in looking at them, how easily the absurdity of the ancient fable may be pardoned, of the giants piling up rocks to scale the heavens, of which this region is the fancied scene. And yet over all this grandeur and sublimity there is ever a subdued and pearly softness that wins the heart to love and feel, as well as to admire these works of God. There is ever that magical effect—that charm peculiar to these shores—the colouring of mere light and atmosphere, which seems to throw a veil of almost spiritual beauty over every feature of the landscape. One does not see *how* this effect is produced, what there is in the ordinary elements of land, air, or water to produce them ; but the effect *is there*, enchanting every sense : seen upon the bosom of an ocean, whose blue vies with the profoundest depths of heaven's vault above ; reflected from mountains and plains, whose surface gives back each varying shade of light with the truth and poetry of nature ; felt in the gentle breeze which fans the cheek with a downy wing, gladdens the heart, and makes one feel what happiness it may be even to live and breathe. There are seasons, indeed days, and hours of the day, when such effects of this favoured climate are more especially visible ; but even in the depth of winter they are rarely and but briefly absent. You look up into the sky, and seldom can you connect the idea of cold and storm with such a flood of light and brilliancy. You look around upon the landscape, and though nothing may be seen but masses of flinty rock in

one direction, a sandy beech or swampy plain in another, or a world of water in a third, yet neither barrenness nor monotony is suggested by them : of barrenness truly no part of nature can be here accused. Wherever a handful of earth has fallen on a shelf of rock, there something rich and luxuriant will be found to flourish. The fertility of the soil throughout this region is marvellous. The fields of the husbandman are literally, as their own poetic idea has expressed it, "ploughed by the sunbeams." In many parts they have but to cast in the seed, plant the vine and the orange tree, and without farther care or culture, the bountiful earth returns them a thousandfold. Indeed there seems nothing to check Nature in such a climate but exertions so profuse that they may well call for the rest which yet she scarcely seems to need. How difficult was it for us, accustomed to the stormy skies and melancholy climate of a northern winter, to realize a day of January in that grateful sunshine, balmy air, and lively landscape, bathed in light as rich and mellow as the best and brightest of England's summer ! This difficulty was not lessened by a profusion of violets, primroses, and lovely wild-flowers blooming all around, with gay and brilliant butterflies hovering over them, as if no paralysing breath of winter might here be feared to cut short their holiday existence.

We reached Amalfi in time to visit the Grotto of the Capuchins, and other places of interest, returning to the small *locanda*, called "La Luna," to dinner. It was a beautiful moonlight evening, and we closed the day with a delicious stroll on the sea-shore, beneath the silvery light of the moon. The next morning proved that even here sudden changes in the weather may be felt ; and we had to cross the mountains in a mist so thick we could scarcely see each other's mules,

until we began to descend on the other side. Now and then we came upon little hamlets beautifully situated ; and many of them with pretty fountains, around which, as the day cleared, were grouped both men and women, chatting and laughing as they filled their classic-shaped water-vessels. Many of the young girls struck me as particularly graceful, their dark hair rolled up like that of some antique statue, or wound in rich plaits around the head. And then again, their strange costume : the scarlet petticoat scarcely reaching to the knee, and a snowy white or bright blue loose jacket. Altogether the women, in this mountain district, realized more my pre-conceived idea of Italian grace and beauty than any peasantry I have yet seen in Italy. The descent, as we proceeded, became tremendously steep, so much so as to make it a matter of some difficulty to keep one's seat, and to occasion many a nervous shudder as the sharp turns caused us quite to overhang the precipitous sides. We performed it in safety, however, and without one false step of the surefooted animals we rode,—reaching Nocera in time for the evening train to Naples.

SECOND ASCENT OF VESUVIUS.

ESUVIUS has continued to us an object of undiminished interest throughout our whole residence in Naples ; and although we had already accomplished one expedition to its summit, yet as its energies were then in an almost quiescent state, we felt by no means satisfied, and often listened with wondering, and somewhat envious interest to the accounts of those who had been on the spot and seen its slumbering terrors fully awakened. Most ardently did we long to witness at least something that might help to realize our idea of an eruption,—and fortunate indeed were we in being at length gratified.

For some weeks past, various reports and prognostications had been afloat of a coming eruption. The mountain had been giving some of its usual symptoms of inquietude, such as an increased density of smoke from the crater, and occasionally an increased violence in its ejections, making the dark vapour to shoot up in the form of a pillar, until the colder atmosphere, pressing it from above, caused it to spread out in

the well-known form of a pine tree. Then also, rumbling noises had been heard internally, and some of the wells in the neighbourhood of Resina were said to have dried up, as is generally the case immediately before the breaking out of the volcano. It may well be supposed then that we were eagerly on the watch for farther movements, and fully on the alert, when told that on Saturday, 31st January, a stream of lava had burst forth on the side next Naples, making its way over the edge and down the pinnacle of the mountain. No time was to be lost in communicating with our friends, and arranging a party for the following Monday. Our plan was to start in time to reach the summit with daylight, and remain till the darkness of night should come on to lend additional grandeur to the scene. The morning of Monday did not promise what is usually considered a propitious day for visiting Vesuvius—that is, the horizon was enveloped in a misty veil, greatly interrupting the view, while the top of the mountain itself was invisible, from a thick fog which hung upon it. Our impatience, however, brooked not delay from such a cause, especially as we went not at all for the sake of the distant prospect, which we had previously enjoyed, but to pay our *devoirs* solely to the volcano itself. As the event proved, we had no reason to regret the lowering sky and gloomy weather.

Our party consisted of six in all, and, for the sake of a better view of the country, the fresh air, and the enjoyment of the thing, we all preferred the outside of Sir J—— O——'s capacious carriage and four; arriving at Resina after a pleasant drive about half-past twelve. From thence we started in half an hour, following the same arrangement as on our previous expedition, and taking the bridle-path to the Hermitage through the vineyards, as being shorter and more

picturesque than the winding carriage-road. When we had proceeded some way, the guides drew our attention to the smoke rising from the descending lava, which had already come down so far as to be visible below the skirts of the vapoury mantle of cloud which continued to envelop the upper part of the mountain. In looking towards this, we observed a movement among the loose fragments of scoriæ upon the sides of the steep above us, and a vapour-like smoke, quite distinguishable from the mist around; but at that distance all was indistinct, and little prepared us for what it was to be on nearer inspection.

Leaving our animals, as before, upon the level platform above the Hermitage, to which has been given the name of "Sala di Cavalli," we started amid the good-humoured cheers of the guides, on our toilsome way. About a fifth of our ascent from this point had been accomplished, when, on pausing and looking upwards, we could very plainly both hear and see the slow downward progress of a body of lava, hissing and rattling among the loose cinders, as it overwhelmed or dislodged them, and occasionally sending huge pieces bounding down the steep declivity in a way that endangered not a little those below. Soon afterwards we came opposite the lower end of this smoking stream, and approached cautiously to obtain a nearer view of it. Even here it was of a glowing red heat upon the surface, though often so covered over with floating cinders and enveloped in smoke, that the actual deep red of the fire was obscured. On looking to the summit, we could see against the sky—as one does on looking from below up to the *shoot* of a cataract above—the stupendous torrent slowly lipping over the edge of the large crater, like a huge, hissing, fiery snake deliberately crawling forth from its lair down upon its victims beneath. The motion is peculiarly

steady and slow, even where the angle of its descent is most abrupt, and accompanied, from the movement of the loose cinders which impede or attend its progress, with a kind of trinkling sound, somewhat resembling that caused by fragments of ice hurstling each other in a half-frozen river. On reaching the summit, we found a considerable change in the appearance of the large crater since our former visit. Instead of the comparatively level platform of hard lava, lying ten or twelve feet lower than the edge on which we stood, and extending to the cone of the active crater in the centre, we found the whole surface greatly elevated, broken up, and heaved into irregular piles, evidently from the recent throes of the volcano beneath. Across this space, slowly winding among its chasms and irregularities, on came the moving lava towards the outer verge, where, after making a circuit almost beneath our feet, it swept round the mound on which we were stationed, and poured over the edge, sending up a heat and a sulphuric atmosphere almost intolerable within a few yards. After a little breathing space here, we went round the verge to a spot at some distance from the running lava, where the surface was not too hot to tread upon, and there bivouacked comfortably, producing our basket-stores of provisions, wherewith to beguile the remaining hours until sunset. After this event takes place, an Italian twilight does not long try the patience of those who long for darkness, as on this occasion we did. And now it was we found the fog amid which we had ascended an advantage to the scene. As evening drew on, the darkness was rendered by it doubly obscure, and the reflection of the lava upon the misty atmosphere, dispersing a fiery tinge above and all around, was beautiful and grand beyond description. Hitherto, during the time we waited, the volcano itself had been peculiarly

quiet and inactive,—only one slight explosion occurring—so much so that we feared a disappointment, and a party who had arrived before us actually took themselves off in despair. A hint from our good friend Salvatore made us act more wisely, and we were indeed abundantly rewarded by seeing it speedily throw off this temporary lethargy, and burst into the most magnificent explosions.

At six o'clock we were startled from our resting-place by a tremendous outburst, which seemed the beginning of a continued series for the whole evening. We sprang to our feet, and stumbling with great difficulty over the jagged masses of lava, scarcely half-cooled, and through an atmosphere at times pungent and stifling to an intolerable degree, we traced the fiery stream to its fearful source. Taking up our position immediately below the crater, we stood in breathless admiration, watching its convulsive throes succeeding each other at intervals of one or two minutes. At times it seemed to pause a little, as though for breathing space, then to increase in fury, sending up its roaring volleys of blood-red stones and dazzling meteors five or six hundred feet into the deep black night of the sky, rendered yet more black and dark by the smoke of the volcano, which at this hour usually collects in murky clouds about the mountain top. These brilliant messengers, after describing a graceful parabolic curve, fall around the sides of the cone in a shower of splendour,—mingling much of the beautiful with the terrible. The scene, and our position, were extraordinary indeed; and the feelings of awe, fascination, and subdued excitement, such as are likely to be but seldom called forth in the same degree during a lifetime. Again and again the idea arose, "Can we ever forget the sensations of this moment!" And yet there was little mingling of fear or nervous apprehension, though sur-

rounded by objects that might well have caused such. We were conscious rather of an elevation of spirit corresponding in some degree with the sublimity of the scene, and the vastness of the power whose operation we witnessed,—a more than ordinary realization of the presence of Him to whom earth and air, fire and water, yea all the powers of heaven and earth are but the ministers of His will ! Yet it were presumptuous to say that there is no danger to spectators in such a position ; —danger there must always be from the perfect uncertainty at what moment or in what place the volcano is next to find a vent. We were made to feel this especially as we stood on a little mound of lava near the mouth of the crater. On one side of this mound, and not above eight or ten feet from us, the eye looked directly into a cavern of fire,—not of flame, but of clear, quivering, glowing fire, like the heart of a fierce furnace seven times heated. This aperture might be about six feet in diameter ;—its depth—that of the mysterious world of terrors below ! It was not a little appalling to discover, by looking at the ragged edges of this opening, how thin and slight is the crust interposed between the foot and the abyss over which it treads. Indeed this had already been evident from the innumerable rents and chasms that seamed the surface over which we had passed, and through which the red fire was often visible at the depth of not more than two inches ; and yet so firm and metal-like feels the resistance to one's step, that without this awful proof, the fact could scarcely be believed. From somewhere between this mound and the foot of the volcanic cone, though invisible for a few yards from what must have been its actual source, oozed forth, slowly and quietly, with a motion and consistency not inaptly likened to that of thick honey, the deep, red, glowing river of lava, winding its deliberate but irresistible way over the black

rugged surface of the large old crater, which, as already explained, forms the whole table summit of the mountain,—creeping over the precipitous edge,—and then down, down—far into the thick darkness of the world below. No description, no painting can give an idea of the intense and glowing red of this molten lava, as it issues fresh from the bowels of the earth. Liquid metal flowing from the furnace of an iron-foundry is the only thing that conveys an idea of it, yet falls short of its vivid glare. A thin white vapour rose from the surface, and the light reflected from it, and colouring its ascending wreaths with a deep rich ruddy tint as it rose into the darkness, marked its downward course, rendering it visible from a great distance, and lending it a strange, wild, awful character, powerfully affecting the imagination. One can approach as near the running lava as the overpowering heat will permit, without the slightest apparent danger. We approached quite to the edge of it, and holding the ends of the staves, with which we were provided, to the lava, they flamed even before touching the liquid fire. One of our party availed himself of it to light a cigar, another did his best to roast an apple, but found the heat too great to complete the operation. Of course, in our cautious movements over the crackling surface, we were implicitly led and assisted by our guides, who bore flaming pine torches to light our footsteps,—little needed, indeed, while the artillery of the mountain was flashing in the sky, but very necessary in the deep darkness of the intervals. Strangely picturesque indeed were the figures of these men, seen in the flickering torch-light, standing in various attitudes upon the little eminences around, leaning on their long white staves, or grouped together around some fiery chasm, the ruddy glare of the fire thrown upwards on their swarthy visages and strange dresses.

At times, too, one of them would start the first notes of a simple air, and then those around would catch it up, and conclude each verse with a burst of one of those wild and most musical choruses, which characterize the old native airs of Italy.

After enjoying the marvellous scene for some hours after daylight had departed, we bethought ourselves of return. Our descent was slow and cautious down the side of the great cone, very different from the mad flight we executed on our former expedition by daylight. Having at length discovered and aroused our horses and their keepers amid the darkness below, we mounted, and after a slow and most hazardous ride through the surrounding gloom, relieved only by the flickering light of the now exhausted torches, our perilous path conducted us at last in safety to the Hermitage, where we fell into the longer but safer carriage-road to Resina. By this time it had begun to rain a little ; and deprived of the artificial heat of the mountain, the air of these lower regions felt chilly and comfortless, contrasting, however, all the more agreeably—in retrospect at least, with the comfort that awaited us in our pleasant rooms at Naples.

At length February arrived, when the prospect of cold spring winds setting in rendered it prudent that we should bid adieu to Naples, its beautiful scenery, its enchanting climate, and the many friends whose society had added so much to our enjoyment there. To the latter, I cannot make even this passing allusion without allowing myself the gratification of naming Dr. Strange, who, as a skilful and experienced medical man, and kind and valued Christian friend, will ever occupy a place in our grateful remembrance.

Our journey from Naples to Rome I shall always recall

with pleasure, not only on account of the delicious weather and lovely scenery, but also of the companions with whom we travelled. I had long previously loved S—— R—— ; but during the latter part of our stay in Naples, and on this journey, I learned to know her still more intimately, and as a necessary consequence, to love her better.

I shall not retrace our steps to Rome over the same route as that by which we had come to Naples ; suffice it to say, we reached our journey's end on the first day of the Carnival, at a most unfortunate hour certainly, for it was just after the confusion and hubbub of the day had commenced. Almost every street was blockaded, and in all directions carriages and horsemen were hurrying to the Corso. However, we did at length reach the "Piazza di Spagna," and then the Via Condotti, where we alighted at the house of Mr. and Mrs. M——, whom we had known at Naples. They were exceedingly kind to us in our dilemma, which was by no means a trifling one. Owing to an unavoidable delay in leaving Naples, the rooms which dear M—— and D—— had kindly taken for us at the Hôtel de Russie, were lost, it being quite impossible at such a time, to keep any rooms long unoccupied, and we could get no others. Indeed, it seemed doubtful if we could get a roof to cover us. At last the M——s bethought them of two bedrooms belonging to a house in the Corso, the balcony of which had been taken by them for the Carnival ; and thither we went about ten o'clock. It seemed even then as if we were to be turned adrift : no sound of reply reached us in answer to our repeated knockings at the door, and we heard only the creaking of sundry buckets which were paying their nightly devoirs to a well in the court below, and slowly drawn up by their several ropes to their several owners. This has a strange appearance to one unaccustomed to this

appendage to every house in Rome. At last one of the drawers of water heard us, and moved with pity—it is to be supposed—came down and offered to go in search of the woman of the house, who accordingly by and by made her appearance, and very civilly conducted us to our rooms. Truly glad were we to obtain even such accommodation as these proved to be, and speedily forgot our fatigues in sound sleep.

ROME.



THE sun shone brightly on the following day, one of the most important of that festive season—the Carnival at Rome! How often have these words passed before my eyes, and how indefinite the ideas they called forth! I may well shrink from attempting a full description of it; many pens far more eloquent than mine have essayed the task, and, as far at least as concerns myself, without much success; for truly nothing could be more entirely new and unexpected than was the whole scene to me,—the strange fantastic medley of every kind of dress, masque, character, and equipage, amid which we found ourselves on entering the Corso.

Having written early in the morning to inform M—— of our arrival, she answered my note in person, giving us a most affectionate welcome to Rome. In the afternoon she came for us, and we went to D——’s balconies, which were in the very best possible position for seeing everything. He himself shortly joined us, and ere long many of their acquaintances. M—— introduced me to her cousin, Prince F——, a very

pleasing, unaffected **person**, entering with great apparent enjoyment into the spirit of the thing. Prince O——, the representative of one of the old Italian families, and a great friend of D——'s, enlivened every one by his good-humoured raillery and fun. After a while, M—— accompanied the Princess Borghese in a *giro* round the Corso, while W—— and I went with some friends to enter more completely into the scene, as of course one sees far more in a carriage, passing on throughout the whole length of the street, than from a balcony, however well situated. We set forth, then, well armed with bouquets of violets and roses, and sundry pretty bonbons ; we ladies being protected by wire-masks, which we soon found were absolutely necessary. The great amusement of many is to throw handfuls of what are called comfits, but in reality peas, perfectly hard and covered with lime. Severely does one suffer in encountering a carriage full of these merciless pelters, or in passing beneath a balcony, from whence they can fire with double energy. We determined not to return the rude sport in kind, but only to throw bouquets and bonbons, and in consequence were very gallantly treated.

Slowly following in the line of carriages, we had showers of bouquets thrown to us, and several really pretty articles among them. One most absurd mask, after giving me a succession of flowers and bonbons, came and stood upon the step of the carriage, making a speech, as in the olden time ; declaring himself my "preux chevalier" for the day, and presenting me with a beautiful sugared bonbon, with little trinkets suspended from it. For this I, of course, returned my best bow and my best bouquet ; the latter he fastened in his hat as a trophy. Another threw me a prettily-worked Turkish bag, which erst had held cigars ; but of these unfemi-

nine luxuries he had assiduously divested it, and supplied their place with bonbons. The groups of beautiful women, the contadini in the picturesque dress of the Campagna and the surrounding districts, were a most interesting part of the exhibition. They looked so joyous, their brilliant black eyes dancing with gladness; their raven hair and clear olive complexions contrasting well with the rich scarlet of their dresses, and quite realizing my preconceived ideas of the splendid beauty of the Italian women. I saw some faces amid that crowd of the most magnificent cast of beauty; and yet there was many a fair girl from old England as lovely in a different style. The most grotesque masks were everywhere to be seen. Friars, Turks, Spaniards, dominoes in thousands; nay, even the heads of animals, bears, donkeys, and baboons. Then there were triumphal cars, carriages driven by elegant damsels, with long ringlets and shepherdess hats, but whose large brown hands and sunburnt features betrayed their disguise. Or again we came upon a group closely pressing round some improvvisatore, whose animated voice and gestures never fail to arrest an admiring audience. Above were gaily decorated windows and balconies, four and five tiers, crowded with bright colours and fair forms, while on either side the street below was lined with double rows of seats. The very air at times seemed darkened with the showers of bouquets that were flying in every direction, amid shouts of laughter, hurrahs, and friendly greetings. Mingling in a kind of harmonious discord with all this were the screaming of Italian bagpipes, the tinkling of hurdygurdies, varied with the far more musical sound of the never-ceasing "Ecco fiore!" of the bouquet-venders, telling you where you might renew your supply of floral missiles. In short, the extraordinary and most bedlam-like appearance of the Corso during that memo-

nable day must be seen—nor only seen, it must be entered into to be at all conceived. The excitement, too, is assuredly infectious. I defy the gravest individual to go and witness all that national good-humour, mirth, and gaiety, and not enter into something of its spirit for the time. Although I certainly thought, before I witnessed it, that such extravagance could only be wearying and childish, no one enjoyed it more than I did when there. At sunset a gun is fired from the Capitol, and a troop of mounted dragoons ride slowly down the centre of the Corso, to clear away the crowd of carriages; and then, whilst the whole street still looks crowded with human beings, they dash back again at full speed, to make way for the horse-race, which follows like a whirlwind a minute or two after them. I had expected much from this part of the spectacle, the race of the *Barberi*, or horses without riders; but a few moments before, I had been told that the poor animals are sadly tortured by sharp spiked balls, hung so as to dangle at their sides, and by this and sundry other devices, are terrified to exert themselves to the utmost, so that I lost all pleasure in looking at them. On, on they came, clearing their way through the dense crowd which opened before them. The distant tramp was heard, a rushing whiz as of cannon-balls that ploughed the surface of the earth, raising a cloud of dust,—and they were past with headlong speed, their receding way tracked by the distant roar and commotion of the vast multitude.

We heard with horror, that the temerity with which many lean forward to the very last moment to see the frantic animals approaching—leaving themselves only the instant in which they pass to withdraw, had cost at least two persons their lives! There is something grating to the feelings in the whole of this part of the spectacle. In former days the

race had to be run by Jews, and though now horses have been substituted, they are still compelled to take home to themselves the barbarous indignity implied, though no longer inflicted, by providing costly prizes for the owners of the winner.

Even in the midst of the confusion of the Carnival, we had been fortunate enough to meet with very nice lodgings in one of the streets leading from the Piazza di Spagna, Capo le Case, and were able to remove to them the same night, to our infinite satisfaction.

I must not pass over in silence the closing scene of the Carnival, the "Moccoletti," in which each person endeavours to keep burning his own lighted torch of wax, and to extinguish his neighbour's. This effected, he exclaims in triumph to the luckless individual, "Senza moccòlo!" The *coup-d'œil* was brilliant to a degree. At every window, even on the roofs of houses, were flaring torches, and the whole street below, each way you looked, bespangled with myriads of dancing, waving lights, many of them encased in various coloured paper lanterns. Nothing can be conceived to surpass the confusion, the din, the bewilderment that reigned around! Cries of "Senza moccòlo," roars of laughter at the expense of the discomfited, or of triumph over some long-successful opponent! Our balconies were crowded, and being conspicuous from the number of lights, we were mercilessly attacked. D—— and several others made capture, however, of a huge broom, with which those in the storey above were continually sweeping out our lights, without our being able to return the favour, till D—— performed this feat, which was a great triumph. M—— and I, tired at last with the noise and heat, not to speak of the smell of extinguished torches, and frequent showers of melted wax,

left rather earlier, walking to a side street at the back of the house. Here not a human being was to be seen except the servants with the carriage; a sudden contrast indeed to the scene we had just quitted. We heard the distant hum of the multitude long after we had left the Corso.

The distractions of the Carnival being over, the crowds of holiday visitors dispersed, and the citizens sobered down into the quiet observance of Lent, we commenced the pleasant task of visiting the various objects of interest in Rome.

We were advised first to go to the Tower of the Capitol, the panoramic view from which enables one to class the antiquities into districts, and to form an idea of their relative situations.

It was an admirable day for the purpose, and with pleasurable excitement we began the ascent of the steep steps which lead to the top of the Tower. Here we passed close beside the large bell of the Capitol,—that bell in itself carrying the mind back to stirring times and mighty deeds. To me it spoke at once of the days of Rienzi, whose noble character, as the friend of the people, is thus beautifully drawn:—

“ Rienzi! last of Romans! while the tree
Of Freedom's withered trunk puts forth a leaf,
Even for thy tomb a garland let it be,—
The forum's champion, and the people's chief,—
Her new-born Numa thou,—with reign, alas, too brief!”

On many occasions during his career this deep-toned bell rung loud and long—its solemn tones, heard by every ear, causing many a heart to vibrate with a response of triumph or of terror.

When we reached the platform of the Tower, it was some moments ere we could fix upon any individual object, the

whole view was so spirit-stirring, teeming as it did with recollections of the world's history. By degrees we began to distinguish many with names—how familiar! On one side we looked out upon the wide Campagna: there were the sweeping arches of the mighty aqueducts extending far along the plains, and the melancholy tombs, grey with age, some mingling their own dust with the illustrious dead beneath, whose virtues they were designed to immortalize. Nearer, and not less full of thrilling interest, were the half-hidden portals of the Catacombs, the burial-place of the early Christians. Far beyond rose the encircling hills, clear and distinct against that sky so intensely blue, with here and there higher and more distant peaks of the snow-capped Apennines towering above them. The little towns, often bearing names that with their very sound bring back the memory of ages, lay scattered along the verge of the plain, or revealed from amidst the shadows of the mountains, by some passing gleam of sunlight resting on them.

Slowly the eye takes in all these more distant objects, and then nearer are seen those noble arches, some still of almost dazzling whiteness beneath the rays of the brilliant sun, the yet enduring memorials of victory,—the Arch of Constantine, of Severus, of Titus. There is a memory, too, that wakens at the sight of that Arch of Titus. On what ruins does it rise? Whose voice, whose words, does it so eloquently proclaim? “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem! thou that wast mighty among nations, how art thou fallen! Behold, thy house is left unto thee desolate.” Every stone in that fabric tells of the fulfilment of that awful prophecy of thy crucified and rejected King: “Not one stone in thy temple shall be left upon another.”

Nearer still to where we stood were the crumbling fanes of

Jupiter Capitolinus—the lonely columns of the Temple of Saturn—the one single pillar, standing alone amid broken fragments of its fellows in the centre of the Forum. The Roman Forum! Yes; that open space below, where children are playing amid the tangled grass, is “The Forum!” “There a thousand years of silenced factions sleep—there the immortal accents glow, and still the eloquent air breathes of Cicero!”

To the left is all that remains of the vanished pomp of “the Golden House of Nero,”—the Palace of the Cæsars, where now the untrained vine and tall reeds grow in wild luxuriance.

From this Tower the “seven hills” can be distinctly marked. The Capitoline on which it stands—the Palatine, covered with vineyards and the ruins of the Palace of the Cæsars—the Aventine, its base washed by the “yellow Tiber.” Over the Coliseum, the eye rests on the magnificent Basilica of St. John Lateran, marking the boundary of the Coelian. The Esquiline is indicated by the Baths of Titus and the Basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore. The Quirinal is made conspicuous by a vast palace of the Pope, on its highest point, Monte Cavallo. The Viminal is very difficult to distinguish, from the flatness of its summit: it lies between the Quirinal and Esquiline.

Moving to another quarter of the platform, the mighty Coliseum comes in view: “A ruin—yet what a ruin!” Walls, palaces, streets, have been reared from the material of its gigantic ruins, and yet one marvels whether, indeed, “it hath been plundered, or but cleared.” And then, ere turning from ancient to more modern Rome, is pointed out the Tarpeian Rock, immediately beneath the Capitol. It is difficult to imagine the death of traitors precipitated over it,

when one looks at an elevation of but a few feet overhanging a garden ; but doubtless the height may have been greatly lessened by the piling up of rubbish from the ruins around.

How sublime, even at this distance, rises the vast and wondrous Dome of St. Peter's, far into the sky, as though asserting its pre-eminence over all beside.

Not far off stands an unpretending Church, yet with much of interest in my eyes, for it was upon its walls Rienzi exhibited the allegorical picture of Rome, which first roused the people. Here, too, he assembled them by the sound of the "solitary trumpet," on the 20th May 1347, and hence in vast streams they poured on to the Capitol, while chanting the Hymn of Liberty !

Let the mountains exult around !
On her seven-hilled throne—renowned—
Once more old Rome is crowned !

Jubilate !

Sing out, O vale and wave—
Look up from each laurelled grave
Bright dust of the deathless brave !

Jubilate !

Pale Vision, what art Thou ?—Lo,
From Time's dark deeps
Like a wind It sweeps—
Like a wind when the tempests blow.

A shadowy form—as a giant ghost—
It stands in the midst of the armed host—
The dead man's shroud on Its awful limbs—
And the gloom of Its presence the daylight din—
And the trembling world looks on aghast :—
All hail to the Soul of the mighty Past !

Hail ! All hail !


As we speak—as we hallow !—It moves, It breathes,—
From its clouded crest bud the laurel wreaths :
As a sun that leaps up from the arms of night,
The Shadow takes shape, and the gloom takes light.

Hail ! All hail !

The Soul of the Past, again
To its ancient home
In the hearts of Rome
Hath come to resume Its reign !

O Fame, with a prophet's voice,
Bid the ends of the earth rejoice !
Wherever the proud are strong,
And right is oppressed by wrong—
Wherever the day dim shines
Through the cell where the captive pines—
Go forth, with a trumpet's sound,
And tell to the nations round—
On the hills which the heroes trod—
In the shrines of the saints of God—
In the Cæsars' halls, and the martyrs' prison—
That the slumber is broke, and the Sleeper arisen !
That the reign of the Goth and the Vandal is o'er !
And earth feels the tread of the Roman
Once more !

THE VATICAN STATUARY BY TORCHLIGHT.

NE evening, at the Palazzo Albano, the conversation turned on the peculiar beauty which torchlight gives to statuary, and the probability that in former days, the Romans employed this mode of heightening the effect of those works of art of which they were so proud. With his usual kindly wish to procure any enjoyment for his friends within his reach, D—— immediately caught at the idea of forming a party some evening to accompany him to the Vatican, to admire its treasures by torchlight. It was with great pleasure I heard him speak of this, as it was a gratification I had no chance of enjoying except through him. No time was lost in making the needful preparations, and in securing the friendly services of Mr. Macdonald, one of the first sculptors then in Rome, to direct the placing of the torches to the best advantage, as well as to enhance our enjoyment by such explanations as an artist alone can give. M——'s cousin, Prince F——, Lord and Lady M——, Lord C——, Lady G——, Madame S——, a very lovely Russian, and Lord de

T——, were of the party ; and with the usual amount of attendants which in Italy are required for everything, together with the torchbearers, we numbered a pretty large assemblage.

I have entered on an arduous task in trying to record any particulars of that wondrous place ; and yet I would not that the power of mentally retracing those hours should be lost to me. Leaving, of course, the Stanze of Raphael, and the galleries containing the famous pictures, we at once passed on to what is called the Galleria Lapidaria, which forms the first division of the corridor of Bramante. We could now only rapidly walk through this collection of ancient sepulchral inscriptions and monuments, though on other occasions I had lingered with pleasure among these records of the early Christians, many of them touching in their simplicity, and in the constant reference to a hope beyond the grave. Neither could we give much time to the Museo "Chiara-Monti," which forms the second division of the gallery ; so that I merely note down here and there a bust or statue that particularly attracted me.

The first was a sitting statue of Tiberius, in the toga, with a crown of oak leaves, found at Veii. Close beside it is one of the most beautiful busts known, in Parian marble, brought from Ostia ; it is of the young Augustus, and represents him about sixteen years of age. Another bust of this Emperor, taken at the age of twelve, was found at Albano, and bought by an English nobleman. The celebrated statue of him at Florence was executed when he was forty ; so that there are three undoubted likenesses of the great Emperor. All resemble each other strongly in feature and character ; the latter being the matured expression of the two former. Then follow "Demosthenes," a celebrated statue found at Frascati ; Antonia, wife of Drusus, and mother of Germanicus, Claudius,

and Livia. The drapery of this figure is wrought out in wonderful perfection ; yet it is surpassed, as it seemed to me, by the finest draped statue I have seen—the “Minerva Medica,” found on the Esquiline. This is one of those sculptures of which neither copy nor description can convey an adequate idea. I was struck with the transparency of the marble, as the flambeaux were so held as to cast the light behind it. The famous torso of Apollonius must not be left unnamed, though I cannot but remark, however heterodox the opinion, that it requires a more matured judgment than mine worthily to appreciate this fragment. So brief are the notices which alone I can bestow on the numberless objects of interest on which the eye fell, as we slowly traversed the immense galleries, that I must wholly pass by many that I should like to name, and stop at the Cortile di Belvedere. And, in truth, the half-hour I spent there only made me long to return. This court is surrounded by an open portico, with four small cabinets, which contain the choicest specimens of sculpture. In the first, is the Perseus and The Boxers, by Canova. I cannot help thinking it must have been contrary to the wish of Canova that they were placed here, challenging comparison with the masterpieces of art. Doubtless they are life-like and energetic, but they *are* *Boxers*, and incapable of producing any pleasing impression on the mind. I therefore turned to the second cabinet, which contains the Antinous. Beautiful it is, indeed ; and as I looked on its graceful form I could well believe that even a Domenichino might learn from it a truer estimate of beauty. It seems to me that great skill has dictated the placing of these statues. After looking upon the finished loveliness of the Antinous, the group in the next cabinet strikes upon the startled senses with a force which even its own power could

scarce have produced, had the mind been more prepared for it. As by one irresistible spell, we all stood motionless when the Laocoon was revealed by the strong light thrown upon it. No one spoke ; it seemed as though the appalling spectacle of human agony arrested every feeling save that of sympathy. I felt as if one could not continue long to look upon the helplessness of those arms, straining to resist the tightening folds of the hideous serpent,—no nearer now to unlock the fatal embrace than they were hundreds of years ago ! There is something in the horrible idea which grows upon the mind, and I turned away lest I should never lose the impression of those forms of agony struggling on for ever and for ever. In thinking of this group afterwards, more perhaps than at the moment, I recalled an imperfection which doubtless has struck others far better qualified to judge. I refer to the proportions of the sons as compared with those of the father. They are not *boys*, but miniature men ; so that one must deem the father a giant. Again I must remark the skill evinced in the arrangement of these statues. Could anything be more enchanting than the change from the positively painful emotions, called forth by the group we had left, to the pure, elevated beauty of the Apollo Belvedere ! There he stands alone : no other statue, no ornament of any kind to divert the attention. I scarce know how I felt, as, somewhat apart from the rest, I looked on that very perfection of ideal beauty. Almost unconsciously a thought of childhood arose,—How would an angel look and move, and in what form would he appear, if once again such a bright messenger were to descend on earth ? Here seemed something to realize the thought—a form meet for an angel. And can a figure so instinct with life be of cold, senseless marble ! So ethereal is it in air and mien, so elastic in attitude, so apparently

quick and light seems the springing step, as if it would not bend the dewy floweret on which it rests. It is the purity, the spirituality of this figure which so exalts it in my estimation. It is difficult to suppose the artist had any model. Had he chosen to represent pure intellect, it would have been comparatively easy ; there would have been the commanding forehead, the lips compressed and firm, the eye deep and full of thought, the whole character concentrated into one single idea—power. But the purely spiritual represented in marble,—what a very miracle of art ! And yet so perfect is this exquisite form that the *material* is forgotten. And there he stands and has stood, to be gazed at by thousands, the subject of every idle comment from the ignorant ; he who looks as if he were just alighting on the world to fulfil some purpose high enough to give this look of sublime energy to his countenance, and having shot his winged arrow, or done whatever fable may have ascribed to him, you see him just about to spring from earth and depart.

How wonderful is this high power God has given to man, thus as it were to perpetuate, from age to age, these beautiful creations of his art, the source of such varied and intense emotions in his fellow-men ! To take but these two works last named, is it not a wondrous power that can yet, after so many hundred years, appeal to the sympathy, nay, cause the very nerves to shrink at the sight of human agony, portrayed in senseless marble ; and again, that can awake the most pleasing sense of beauty by means of that motionless, ever-enduring form of ethereal grace, which at this day, as at the first, embodies to each beholder his ideal of perfection !

I have often thought—what were these men themselves, to whom such noble gifts were intrusted ? Did their inner

sense of moral and intellectual beauty correspond with the genius that could create a semblance so faithful of their outward form? Sad is it to fear, in too many instances, that even like ourselves who look with rapture on their works, the gift was often deified and adored, while the Giver was dishonoured and forgotten! Yet I have lately, and with peculiar pleasure, met with the translations of several poems by the old Italian painters and sculptors, as well as poets, which seem to show that, in some instances at least, those gifted men had been led to taste of purer streams and higher sources of enjoyment than genius could open, or the sense of beauty yield them.

I shall transcribe one whose author lived, it is true, at a comparatively later date, but whose genius and fame has rivalled even the highest name among them all—Michael Angelo Buonarrotti.

“Now my frail bark through life's tempestuous flood
Is steer'd, and full in view that port is seen,
Where all must answer what their course has been,
And every work be tried, if bad or good.
Now do those lofty dreams, my fancy's brood,
Which made of Art an idol and a queen,
Melt into air, and now I feel—how keen!—
That what I needed most I most withstood.
Ye fabled joys, ye tales of empty love,
What are ye now, if two-fold death be nigh?
The first is certain, and the last I dread.
Ah! what does Sculpture—what does Painting prove—
When we have seen the Cross, and fixed our eye
On Him whose arms of love were there outspread!”

ST. PETER'S.



WELL might Gibbon pronounce St. Peter's "the most glorious temple that ever was raised for the purpose of religious worship." At each successive visit it has grown upon us in vastness and beauty, until we have felt as though the idea of it were becoming too vast for the mind to master by rules and measurements applicable to other edifices. The only way to comprehend its real magnitude is to judge it by *space* and *distance*, as one does the size of a plain or of a mountain. In ordinary buildings, the various details are usually estimated by some familiar measurement. For example, one has some idea of the height and width of the door of entrance, and may take for granted that the breadth, length, and height of its architectural parts will be in proportion; and these we comprehend accordingly with tolerable correctness. It is true that here also these proportions are carried out with the most beautiful and faultless exactness. But then the *first* step the mind has to take—the actual proportions of the entrance itself, or of whatever object the eye of the measurer

[illegible]



INTERIOR OF ST. PETER'S.

starts from—are so stupendous, so far beyond anything one has previously seen in architecture, that the eye is constantly deceived. In the well-known instance of the white marble cherubs supporting the basins of “Holy Water” on each side near the entrance, I never doubted, at the first glance, that they were of the ordinary size of children, which they represent; yet on near inspection we found them at least seven feet high, and with their chubby limbs, representing infancy, more massive than three ordinary men! And so through all its wondrous details. There are figures of the Evangelists in mosaic, round the lowest compartment of the dome, which, from below, look very little larger than life, and yet the exact length of the *pen* which St. Luke holds in his hand is five and a half feet. Again, there is the magnificent Baldacchino or canopy, of bronze gilt, of rich and exquisite workmanship, directly under the dome, over the high altar and tomb of St. Peter. As you enter the building at the further end, this structure appears the size of an ordinary pulpit; it would never occur to any one as being more, and yet the cross which surmounts this Baldacchino is ninety-two feet above the level of the pavement on which you stand—as high as many of our common church spires! This deception of the eye readily accounts for the fact that the edifice itself does not, on many minds, till after repeated visits at least, produce that overwhelming feeling of greatness which one might expect. There is one peculiarity, however, which at once strikes the stranger in St. Peter’s, and which assists greatly, I think, in realizing the vastness of the space—and that is the purity and freeness of the atmosphere. Unlike ordinary churches or halls of the largest dimensions, there is no unpleasant feeling of dampness or of confined air, nor any peculiar smell of the materials of which it is composed. All





is too distant and open for this. The interior of St. Peter's has a climate, so to speak, of its own: it is never chilly, and never close or heated. From the very immensity of its space there is a soothing stillness—a calm in its atmosphere, which no sudden draughts or currents can disturb. No matter what may be the temperature without, winter or summer, within this world of beauty, and beneath that firmament of glowing colours and golden splendour, the seasons seem to know no change, the subdued and softened atmosphere has ever the same grateful soothing to the senses.

We found on experience, almost more than we had anticipated, that an ascent to the summit of St. Peter's is the only way by which any adequate idea can be formed of its true magnitude. This ascent presents, indeed, one of the most extraordinary spectacles.

In the first place, you do not, as in ordinary buildings, mount flights of common steps, apparently interminable, not so much from actual number as from their laborious steepness, and a dark and stifling staircase; but you walk easily and agreeably upwards by a broad paved road, constructed *a cordoni*, well lighted, more than wide enough for the passage of a laden waggon, and of so gentle an ascent that horses constantly go up and down with their burdens. Arrived upon the principal roof, the scene presents somewhat the appearance of a little village of workmen, who, with their dwelling-houses, implements, heaps of materials, a fountain of water constantly flowing, and other symptoms of complete domestication, and permanent residence in this higher sphere, seem to have nothing to do with the world below. As we traversed the immense fields of lead, we recalled, and quite understood what the American author Cooper says, in his account of the ascent, that he was "seized with the idea of

having a horse to gallop about upon it!" From this plain the three domes arise. The two side ones, which are not seen from immediately below, rise above it to the height of one hundred and thirty-six feet. Each of these would itself be a very fine dome proportioned to a large church; but they are insignificant beside that which rises in the centre like a little mountain from the plain. Its architecture, ornament, and proportions, which seem to me absolutely perfect, can only be judged of here; as, indeed, the size of the dome can only be: for besides that it is double, and that the interior only of the inner one (which the outer encases) is that which is seen from the pavement below inside the Church, the extent to which the roof stretches on every side, prevents the base of the outer dome from being seen at all, except from a considerable distance.

The broad road of ascent continues no farther than this. We had therefore to traverse the leaden plain to reach the architectural mountain we had still to climb. A long series of short flights of steps, and narrow passages of inclined plane, leads to the summit of the dome. About half way up, the cicerone ushered us by a doorway upon a railed gallery, which opens upon, and runs round the interior. It is a moment and a position this, I think, to try the strongest nerves, and affect the dullest imagination. Not that there is the slightest danger, for the gallery is broad, and a high substantial railing prevents the possibility of a fall; but the stupendous spectacle itself, bursting suddenly and unexpectedly upon one, must inevitably produce a powerful impression of some kind. With me it was one of deep awe and solemnity, a feeling of overwhelming magnitude, as though everything around, on which the eye rested for a moment, were preternaturally expanding,—growing larger and larger even while

one gazed, until the sensation became almost one of pain and bewilderment! We looked across a vast dim gulf, round which the massive balustrade ran on the opposite side like a slender cord. The mosaic figures, forms, and faces, which from below look like delicate and softly-shaded pictures, are here found to be composed of large cubes of marble, coarsely fitted together and roughly coloured, while with huge limbs and gigantic features, the forms depicted seem to glare upon you strangely, like the very genii of space and greatness! For one moment I leant over, and looked down; but oh, what words can describe the shuddering, yet fascinated wonder of that look and scene! Yet I looked more steadily than I can even think of now. It was at the first glance an abyss of dim space and indistinctness, but a steadier gaze showed it to be one of beauty and of grandeur.

I believe the deception as to height, at least, must here be reversed; for to judge by the appearance of objects below, it seemed more like looking down from a mountain of a thousand feet than a gallery of four hundred. There were some hundreds of people on the pavement below, yet the eye had to search for and fix itself upon the diminutive specks ere they could be distinctly recognised as such; and though these seemed moving across a field of marble, one yet sees from this position but a portion of the whole area. From this point, the next stage of ascent is to another inside gallery of smaller circumference, at the very top of the dome, and at the foot of the conical-shaped neck that surmounts it, called the Lantern. From this gallery we could but cast one hasty glimpse below. The dizzy, reeling vacancy into which the eye plunges is almost maddening, and, I could imagine, might soon suggest the horrible idea of leaping over! The Lantern is a little octagonal-shaped room, about fourteen feet wide at


the bottom, and tapering to the top. On one side is a little wooden staircase, up which we scrambled, and then on by an iron ladder inside the narrow stalk or rod of the ball, into which I stepped and stood upright, with several feet of space above me. It would easily hold a dozen people, but owing to the power of the sun, and the stifling smell of heated metal, there was not enough of wholesome air even for one. I was glad speedily to find my way down again. We stood long enjoying the view from the gallery which encircles the outside of the Lantern; a view that may be surpassed, indeed, by some in the mere beautiful and picturesque, but which, in stirring interest, in memories and associations of the past, in strange and striking objects of the present, in solemn thoughts and undefined shadows of the future, may well challenge the world to show its equal. In every part of the horizon, save to the south, where the eye catches for a moment—distant but refreshing—the blue sparkle of the Mediterranean, a varied and picturesque chain of mountains bounds the view, every portion of which is a landmark of the world's history, the scene of classic fable, or the haunt of immortal genius. Nearer, but for miles and miles on every side, stretches the softly undulating, but melancholy Campagna, where it ever seems to me as though Nature herself would eloquently tell, in the calm mournfulness of the face she wears, to every wanderer as he comes to look upon her, the sad moral of the fallen mighty one! And then, stretched literally beneath one's feet, lies spread the city itself—not Rome truly, but Rome's remnants and memorials—a book wherein is read in plainer and more impressive characters than any printed page could show it, the vanity of earth, and all that rests upon it! They say that to moralize on Rome is trite and commonplace; but as well might one attempt to read some tale of

true and tragic interest, and close the book without one thought or feeling about it, as to look on this theatre, so long that of the world's concentrated destinies, and focus of its power, its wisdom, and its energies, and not feel the heart overflow, and the mind lose itself, in a thousand emotions and memories. You think of all her once unchecked and haughty pride, when her intercourse with other nations was but despotic law-giving, and the language of universal boast ; when she claimed a title which now even to recall is the deepest satire upon her fate, "the Eternal City !" You look at her now, and without any other testimony, would not the air of expressive silence and decay which hangs over her sombre roofs, her grey and time-worn palaces, her mouldering ruins, tell you that ages have seen it all trampled in the dust, and the spark of its vitality fled for ever ! You think of her power—her impregnable, defying strength—and you can plainly trace the full outline of her crumbling walls and fallen bulwarks standing yet, but only as it seems in mockery, and in moral of man's boasted strength and real weakness ! You think of that wealth, and pomp, and grandeur, which it was the wonder of all nations to contemplate, the spoiling and humiliation of all nations to minister to ;—and now the only vestiges of existing wealth, the only traces of pomp and splendour are the temples, domes, and palaces, that have been raised on the ruins of this City of the Cæsars ! And raised by whom ? by the votaries of that sect, which, in imperial Rome, was long too contemptible to be noticed ; raised, too—however in ignorance as to the true worship of Him who "dwelleth not in temples made with hands"—professedly to the honour of that despised Nazarene, whose name she had scarce then heard, nor deigned to ask after ; whose obscure followers, when at length recognised, were noticed only as

fitting victims of the cross, the fire, or the ferocity of wild beasts, to furnish for the arena a spectacle to regale her citizens on chosen holidays ! Yes, truly, "The Lord doeth according to His own will in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth ; and He hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and the weak things of the world to confound the strong ; and things that are despised hath God chosen, yea, and things that are not, to bring to nought things that are."

THE PROTESTANT BURYING-GROUND.

April 3.

ADY M—— called to take me to the Protestant Burying-Ground. It is a lovely spot, a little beyond the walls, and close to one of the most imperishable monuments of antiquity, the pyramid of Caius Cestus. It is a little sheltered nook on a gentle declivity looking towards Rome, between Mount Aventine and a small hill called Monte Testaccio. The sunbeams fall warm and bright upon its slopes, and countless flowers fill the air with perfume. An avenue of tall China-rose trees, almost arching overhead, leads from the gate to the upper end, and many of the marble monuments are half hidden by the luxuriant growth of lovely and fragrant shrubs. The stillness around has something sweet and soothing in it, but nothing of desolation. It gave me a feeling of melancholy pleasure to see this spot as it is. There is such sadness in the thought of leaving the earthly remains of one who has made life sweet to us, in a foreign land, far from our own familiar homes, that truly one feels the want of

some associations that may at least soften the pang. Here, I felt that such might be the case. There is a cared-for look about each separate grave that told of remembering friends even in the stranger's land.

I read many of the epitaphs: one or two, with their marble monuments, are very simply beautiful. On one is a broken lily, with the name inscribed beneath it of a young English girl lately buried. I sought for the monument erected in remembrance of "Rosa Bathurst," whose sad fate is inscribed upon the marble slab. She was the pride and idol of her family, a lovely, amiable girl, full of life and spirits. While riding with a party of friends on the banks of the Tiber, whose waters were at the time unusually large and swollen, her horse suddenly became unmanageable, and backing, fell with her into the river! She sank instantly, and it was some months before her body was found! Near this grave is another which I regarded with interest. It is that of a brother of our friends the R——s, who was also drowned in the Tiber, by the upsetting of a boat. In the upper part of the ground the ashes of our English poet Shelley are laid. We sat down here, and read the lines he himself wrote on the death of his friend and brother-poet, Keats:—

"The spirit of the spot shall lead
Thy footsteps to a slope of green access,
Where, like an infant's smile, over the dead
A light of laughing flowers along the graves is spread;
And grey walls moulder round, on which dull Time
Feeds like slow fire upon a hoary brand.
And one keen pyramid with wedge sublime,
Pavilioning the dust of him who plann'd
This refuge for his memory, doth stand
Like flame transformed to marble; and beneath,
A field is spread—on which a newer band
Have pitch'd, in heaven's smile, their camp of death,
Welcoming him we lose, with scarce extinguish'd breath.

Here pause.—These graves are all too young as yet
To have outgrown the sorrow which consign'd
Its charge to each."

The day shone in all the brightness and heat of one in June, when, with Miss E—— and K—— M——, we set off on a long drive; first going to the Theatre of Marcellus, built by Augustus, and dedicated to his sister Octavia's son, the young Marcellus. Her name he gave to a magnificent portico, added to the Theatre, as a place of shelter. It is still an enormous pile, though greatly disfigured by the vicinity of the Orsini palace, and the dirty shops which occupy the ground-storey.

The Baths of Caracalla, just beyond the Palace of the Cæsars, came next. These ruins are a perfect labyrinth of gigantic walls and arches, covering several acres of ground—perhaps the most stupendous monument of the wealth and power of ancient Rome, except the Coliseum, to be seen, though by no means proportionally interesting.

Our third stoppage was at the Tomb of the Scipios. This is in a vineyard not far from the beginning of the Appian Way. We got out at the Antique Gate, a kind of portico with stone seats, and after reading the inscription—"Sepolcro' dei Scipioni," entered the Tomb. Our guide, a fine dark-eyed Italian girl in a most picturesque dress, lighted tapers, and led the way into the interior. The inscriptions, marking the different members of the family buried here, are quite legible. It is pleasing to muse in that quiet spot on the history of this noble race, on the many high-souled virtues which adorned, and the many stirring scenes which rendered famous the lives of some of them; and then to recall the funereal pomp and splendour which this very place has witnessed when the drama of life was closed, and the body of the great was gathered to his fathers.

We went next to a "Columbarium," not far from the Tomb of the Scipios. It is so called from the rows of little niches, like the holes of a pigeon-house, in which were placed the urns which held the ashes of the dead. The one we saw is supposed to be a very good specimen of these sepulchral monuments, and the inscriptions above each of the niches prove it to have belonged to the time of Augustus and Tiberius. The interior is painted with Arabesques.

A drive of about ten minutes brought us to the Circus of Romulus,—the most perfect that has been discovered. It is a vast oblong space, and bears the date of 311. The length is said to be fifteen hundred and sixty feet, and the width two hundred and fifty. The outer wall is very nearly entire. Inside, the turf is remarkably smooth, and with the many bright flowers which enamel it, forms a carpet of variegated colours most pleasing to the eye.

From hence we had a good view of the Tomb of Cecilia Metella. It is a tower of immense size and strength, formed of huge blocks of travertine, fitted together with the greatest precision, and without cement. The frieze and cornice are both very rich, the former ornamented with bas-reliefs in white marble. The inscription, *Ceciliæ Metellæ*, is legible, but nothing to give any insight into either the life or death of this "lady of the dead." This mystery caught the imagination of the poet, who has thrown yet greater interest on the tomb, by those lines in *Childe Harold* :—

"What was this tower of strength? Within its cave
What treasure lay so locked, so hid? A woman's grave.
But who was she, the lady of the dead,
Tomb'd in a palace? How lived—how loved—how died she?
Whither would conjecture stray?
Thus much alone we know,—Metella died
The wealthiest Roman's wife. Behold his love—or pride."

Leaving this side of the Campagna, a pleasant drive brought us to the Fountain of Egeria,—one of the sweetest spots imaginable. The surface of the ground undulates in the most picturesque manner. Little hills and dales, tufted occasionally with trees whose branches hang gracefully to the ground, and all between smooth and verdant with the luxuriant grass. The sacred grove, with its dark mysterious shade of ilex, formed a singular and most striking contrast to the laughing radiance and summer beauty of all else. The path which leads to the Fountain itself winds down one of these grassy hills, passing the base of the “Sacred Mount.” The ruins of the old Temple are almost hidden by the festoons of ivy and other graceful creepers, which seem more lavish of their loveliness in a spot like this than in the cultivated garden. The tall reeds bend before the breeze, and seem to whisper to each other the story of the ideal nymph whose poetic name has bequeathed such interest to the fairy scene. The flowers looked all so fresh in that bright day of early spring; and gemmed with the dewy spray which fell upon it from the gushing fountain, the small-leaved trembling celandine quivered beneath the diamond drops; and now its emerald green became more bright than ever, as the flickering sunbeams ever and anon stole in to play a moment in this cool refreshing grotto, while farther in, reclining in deeper shadow, lay the broken figure, still remaining, the genius of the place! Well might the poet say—

“Egeria! whate’er thou art or wert,
Thou wert a beautiful thought,—a sweet creation.”

The wild-flowers surpass anything I ever saw. Each step we took trod upon violets, with their deep blue eyes peeping out from the rich herbage; mignonette mingled its refined

sweetness with their fragrance; the Star of Bethlehem with its snowy purity; the orchis in endless variety; anemones of every hue, from the brightest scarlet and deepest crimson to the most delicate white. Lizards darting with the quickness of thought—hither—thither—everywhere; butterflies so gay and bright, one might think them flowers on the wing. The “tuneful cicada” concealed among the grass, or perched upon the branch of some shady tree, with clear shrill pipe singing us welcome as we wandered past.

From the higher ground we looked again with admiration that never wearies on the Campagna with its circling mountains. The soft and pensive haze of beauty that hangs over this wide and melancholy expanse seemed yet more touching in that evening hour. Ere we reached the gates of the city, it was the “Ave Maria,” and the chimes rung out from every church,—rising and falling on the ear, as the gentle night-breeze wafted them.

It was a fitting close to a day so full of the enjoyment of the beautiful both in Nature and in Art.

ST. JOHN LATERAN.



NEXT to St. Peter's, the venerable Basilica of St. John Lateran is, in many respects, the finest in Rome; and certainly that to which is attached the most peculiar interest. It was the first Christian Church erected here; and it is on record that Constantine the Great assisted with his own hands in digging the foundations. It is further remarkable for Five General Councils held within it, which constitute important eras in the history of the Church.

The façade is built of travertine, with ten fine columns supporting a massive entablature and balustrade, on which are colossal statues of our Lord and ten saints. The rich mellow colour which age imparts to the travertine, adds not a little to the general aspect of the edifice.

The interior has been several times changed, and at present loses much of the imposing effect which its vast space and fine nave would otherwise produce, from the stucco and whitewashing with which the ceiling and the walls have been barbarously covered.

The great ornament of the nave is the Corsini Chapel: it is truly a superb collection of all that is most gorgeous and beautiful! Highly finished ornaments of every description—gilding, bas-reliefs, columns of marble almost with the transparency of agate, and so precious that their cost cannot be estimated; sparkling gems, too, are not wanting; and yet there is an exquisite taste pervading the whole, which completely prevents the glare which so much magnificence might otherwise occasion.

On one side of the Chapel is a celebrated porphyry sarcophagus, the tomb of Clement XII., taken from the Pantheon. Of the four figures which are placed in niches, one by Rusconi pleased me particularly, from its simple grace; but it was in a little gloomy vaulted chapel below that we saw by far the most interesting piece of sculpture. The group is cut out of a single block of the very purest marble, and consists of the Virgin Mary bending over the dead body of our Lord. It is the only representation of the subject in marble I have seen, in which both the expression of the features, and position of the inanimate form of the Saviour, are at all satisfying. I was exceedingly disappointed with the treatment of the same subject by Michael Angelo, in St. Peter's, although so generally admired. The workmanship, no doubt, is fine; but even in this respect I cannot think Bernini's need yield; while in the latter, the unutterably touching expression of the Virgin's face—the blending of earthly sorrow with Divine consolation—excites the deepest interest and sympathy.


From the Church we went to the cloisters, which are good specimens of the Gothic of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. The twisted columns, with the old mosaic ornaments upon them, are very beautiful. A broken pillar is pointed out, said by Church tradition to have been brought from

Jerusalem, and to have been thus split when the veil of the Temple was rent in twain. Attached to the Basilica is a fine portico, where the "Scala Santa" is placed. This far-famed staircase consists of twenty-eight marble steps, brought, it is said, from the house of Pontius Pilate, and the identical stairs by which the Saviour descended when he was taken from the judgment-hall. It is impossible to look at, and to tread upon those steps without a feeling of deep and peculiar interest ; for so positive, and, so far as I am aware, unquestioned is the tradition relating to them, and at the same time so far from improbable in itself, that I do not see why we should refuse to receive it. To protect the marble from being actually worn away by the multitudes who are continually ascending these steps upon their bare knees, it has been found necessary to cover them over with a wooden casing ; and this, we were told, has already been several times renewed. I certainly felt, as I watched the poor penitents slowly ascending in this humble attitude, that however mistaken *their* motives for so doing, yet that this was the fitting posture in which to recall, in the presence of this memorial, that which caused the foot of the Son of God once to rest there !

In a Chapel at the top of the "Scala Santa," is a portrait of our Lord, attributed to St. Luke, and supposed to have been taken when He was twelve years of age !

The Baptistery of this Basilica formerly contained the immense porphyry font (but very lately indeed removed to the Vatican) in which Constantine received the rite of baptism. In this same font Rienzi bathed on the night of August 11, 1347—the night before he showed himself with his badges of knighthood, and was crowned in this Church with the symbolical seven crowns.

PICTURE GALLERIES.

OME days have been regularly devoted to systematic sight-seeing, and a very fatiguing thing I must own it to be, even with all its enjoyments; nay, I almost think it is when one sits down quietly to arrange one's recollections, and class them under different heads, that the greatest amount of enjoyment is felt. Be that as it may, I must see how far, without wearisome repetition, I can record the most prominent features of what I have seen.

I find it difficult, even with all my love for paintings, to sketch them with my pen, some of those I most admire possessing a kind of beauty which nothing but a pencil dipped in a Raphael's colours can portray, or a Rogers' pen can describe. Yet my own little cabinet would seem blank without at least an outline of them.

The Borghese Gallery must take the first place therein; and I will begin with the "Entombment of Christ," the first historical picture by Raphael, and painted by him when in his twenty-fourth year. As usual with this great artist,

the spectators' personal sympathies are irresistibly appealed to by the passions depicted. Perhaps one of the first objects on which the mind dwells is the mother's anguish. She sees the Saviour borne to the sepulchre, his lifeless body about to be laid in the "new tomb." She had stood near him through his dying agony, and received his farewell of tender care as He bequeathed her to the disciple "whom he loved." "Last at the cross and earliest at the tomb," she never left him while life remained. But now that his lifeless body is borne away, the mother of Jesus for the first time gives way to her own sorrow, and falls back well-nigh as lifeless as her Lord.

There is something so natural in the imagined filling up of the sacred story by the painter in this picture, that one cannot but go along with him in all he has defined. Scarcely less touching is the intense grief of St. Peter, St. John, and Mary Magdalene, while the gathering together of these three—"the disciple whom Jesus loved," and the two whom our Lord himself described as "loving much, for much had been forgiven them," adds much to the truthful expression of the whole.

The picture which most fascinated me, after the one I have described, is so different, that perhaps it should not come immediately after a subject taken from Sacred Scripture; yet no other gave me anything like the same degree of pleasure, though pleasure of another kind. In naming this, I must at the same time speak of one bearing the same name in the Capitol, and indeed the finer of the two; yet are their expressions strangely different. The beauty of this face is more touching, more innocent. She is younger,—fairer. In the Sybil of the Capitol,—as I looked into the depths of her dark eyes, so wild, so lustrous—I fancied her in the cave

which bears her name, the light of torches flashing on her mystic jewels, her many-tinted robes, her high white brow ; whilst her voice echoed through that vaulted cavern, as she gave forth her oracles. Yes ; *she* is the Sybil of the Cumean Cave. But for this fair timid girl, with her almost childlike beauty, her eyes seem questioning the stars, as though she were not yet content. It is truth methinks *she* seeks with that earnest thoughtful gaze. There is sublimity in her loneliness, in her youth, in her fond but vain superstition. It is a picture to dwell on in the still and solemn night, not in the garish light of day.

There are two others which must not be wholly passed by : the one by Domenichino, "The Chase of Diana ;" the colouring is brilliant, but, as a whole, it is devoid of that dignity and purity which usually distinguish this Master. The other is by Titian, "Sacred and Profane Love," an allegorical representation : two female figures sitting on the side of a well, one clothed in white, the other with red drapery over the shoulder. In colouring it is worthy of the artist.

And yet another noted picture there is here,—“St. Anthony preaching to the Fishes.” to me it is positively ludicrous. The saint, a most commonplace-looking mortal, perched upon a rock, with a green sky above and around him. It looks like the sea reflected in the sky, instead of *vice versa* ; and why not, upon an occasion so marvellous ? Meanwhile the fishes are evidently not much impressed with the saint's eloquence, and seem rather inclined to keep at a respectful distance. I have no patience with such a picture as this. I could forgive it were it designed to excite a smile ; but to see people gravely discussing such a subject in the same room with those other glorious creations, is a great trial of my equanimity.

I have spent almost too long a time in the Borghese niches of my cabinet, and therefore pass by all others, and proceed to the Palazzo Berberini, famed as possessing one of the marvels of Rome—the Cenci of Guido. Little need is there for me to dwell on that face, since once seen it is not likely to be forgotten ; and yet it is not of its mere beauty I would speak, for it is not one of surpassing loveliness. . Moreover, there is a greenish tint in the shading round the mouth which detracts yet more from it in this respect ; though if designed to portray the wan look of confinement and despair, its effect is most successful. There is an expression of gentleness, of patient submission to her sad lot, which is even more striking than the blank despair one might have expected. There is, too, an utter carelessness in the whole of her attire, in the folds of the heavy white drapery from which her hair has partially escaped, while the golden gleam which has not yet faded from its rich tresses, only contrasts the more strongly with those lustreless eyes which can weep no more ! It is a saddening picture, and one I had no wish to dwell on, notwithstanding its pathos and its interest.

I did not much admire the Fornarina in this room ; at any rate, it is somewhat coarse, and looks yet more so beside the refined and delicate Beatrice Cenci. I turned to a portrait possessing peculiar attraction for me, viz., one of Cola Rienzi. The charm with which the pen of Bulwer has invested this noble Roman, was scarce needed to increase the kind of veneration with which I contemplated this authentic representation of the Last of the Tribunes.

On the morning of another of our sight-seeing days, M—— wrote to fix the hour for calling with D—— to take us to the Palazzo Sciarra, a small gallery, containing not only very choice pictures, but very few inferior ones. Many of

them are well known, and have had more justice done to their merits in the copies that have been produced from them, than is generally the case. Moreover, there is no doubt but that some pictures are more easily given in engravings than others.

I enjoy greatly visiting galleries of art with D——; not only is his taste correct and cultivated in appreciating the artistic beauty of a painting, but he also enters into its spirit in a way after my own heart.

Here is that marvellous picture of Leonardo da Vinci, "Modesty and Vanity," two female half figures: the former, with a veil over her head, has a particularly noble and dignified profile, with a clear open expression. She beckons to her sister, who is fronting you, gaily attired, and with a smile half mischievous, half self-satisfied with the lovely face she has just seen reflected in the small looking-glass which she holds in her hand. It is all most wonderfully finished, and the colouring peculiarly rich. A magnificent Titian next attracted me: one of the female figures especially is as splendid a piece of colouring as can be conceived, differing from, though scarcely surpassing, that of the Leonardo I have just noticed. These pictures somehow seem to set off the several beauties of each other, they are so perfect in their different styles. This may be said of the Magdalen of Guido, another lovely face, with the peculiar character of Guido's ideal of female beauty strongly defined. The Violin Player, by Raphael, is too well known to need any detail, and it is not a picture from which either to draw a moral or to weave a tale: the soft fur collar of the velvet cloak tempts to pass one's hand over it; but there is no poetry in it. The "Gamblers Cheating," by Caravaggio, is that sort of picture which is made disagreeable by very faithfulness to its subject.

From this Palace we paid another visit to the Palazzo Doria, and on this occasion, as M—— and D—— purposed calling upon the Princess Doria, I had an opportunity of seeing the private apartments. These are not only furnished with the utmost taste which a combination of English comfort and Italian magnificence can exhibit, but possess one or two paintings of rare beauty. They are, generally speaking, portraits, and therefore description would be out of place. I was particularly struck with the effect of four rooms *en suite*, in which the hangings were of colours the most strongly contrasted ; green, gold, crimson, and rich blue, with the ornaments in each corresponding.

Again we lingered to examine the treasures to be found among the numerous paintings in this immense gallery. Chiefest among these are the unrivalled Claude Lorraines, known by the names of the Molino and Temple of Apollo. It is not easy to describe a landscape painting, but one longs to sit beneath the shade of those trees, so powerful is the effect of the haze of heat shed over the distant mountains. One feels the languor of the hour. Glowing under the fervid rays, even the very water seems as though it would fail to cool. With a sensation as from the dewy breath of evening, one turns next to the sunset which has gilded the Temple of Apollo, and the irresistible acknowledgment rises in the mind, that Claude was in truth a fitting painter for such a land.

Not far from these is a St. Agnes, by Guercino, a face such as one sometimes dreams of—a beauty with more of heaven than earth in its expression. Here, too, is a celebrated landscape, “the Belisario,” by Salvator Rosa, another of Italy’s painters, whose province was to portray her sterner features. His chosen subjects are the mountain scene, the

lonely defile, the rushing torrent, the eagle whirling round its eyrie, the tear and strife of elements, or the deep impenetrable forest, with its mysterious glades, its robbers' caves and hidden recesses. These he puts before you at once with power and nature. In looking at Salvator Rosa's landscapes, I have always an impression of loneliness and desolation, almost of awe; especially as he generally introduces bandits, or a hermit, or a wandering traveller. Truly he must have had a living sympathy with all that is stern and wild.

VESPERS.



HAVE had quite an adventure to-day, and while my mind is full of it, I will record it.

I do think there never was such a cicerone as O—— M——! How she contrives to penetrate through the barriers even of custodés and closed doors, I know not, but certain it is, that with her I am always sure of accomplishing what I wish on these occasions. We agreed to go together to the Vespers at St. Peter's; and, knowing that on this evening every usual approach to the side-chapel, in which the service is performed, would at an early hour be thronged, I feared we were rather late. She smilingly reassured me, and having directed the coachman, he drew up at a small entrance I had not previously noticed. We got out here, and entered one of the aisles farthest from the principal entrance into St. Peter's. The great gates of the chapel itself were closed, and pressing eagerly against them, stood the multitude waiting for admittance. As we had a few minutes to wait here, while my friend sent in her card to one of the ecclesiastics with whom she was acquainted, I turned

away from the crowd, and sauntered on alone towards the high altar. I was musing on the silence and solitude that reigned in this part of the vast edifice, and contrasting it with the bustle and confusion in that which I had left, when suddenly a voice fell on my ear—long unheard, yet familiar—one whose tone recalled the sunny hours and pleasant scenes of earlier days! Eagerly looking round, I observed a tall graceful figure leaning on the arm of a distinguished-looking man. I hastily advanced to where they stood, and saw at a glance I had not been deceived. One word was enough,—“Augusta!” A bright smile of recognition lighted up her face; and though long years had passed away since we met, scenes and objects once familiar to us both—bygone hours of light-hearted gaiety—dear mutual friends, who had shared them with us, seemed all actually present once more!

There is, to me, an intense and peculiar enjoyment in such an unlooked-for meeting with one who may be valued not only as a personal friend, but whose very presence has a power to unlock the chambers of memory, and bring forth from thence the endeared associations of the past. But on these neither of us had now time to linger; O—— came almost immediately to recall me, and hastily fixing an hour for meeting on the following day, we parted, anticipating with mutual pleasure this unexpected renewal of our intercourse.

Meanwhile, my friend's application had been answered in person, by the Monsignore to whom it had been addressed. O——, who speaks Italian beautifully, made known our desire to secure a favourable place for enjoying the music; and, as soon as I had been introduced, Monsignore—— requested us to follow him. He opened a door in one of the square pillars in the side of the building, close to where we were standing, so unexpectedly to me, that I was almost

startled. I scarcely think the minutest scrutiny could have discovered any opening, it seemed so completely a part of the stone pillar ; and as it noiselessly closed upon us, with many rising recollections of mysterious tales, I followed with O—— through a narrow vaulted passage leading to a small antechamber. Here we waited for a few moments, but not long enough to call for any exercise of patience. One of the officials presently approached, and desired us to follow him. After another dark passage, we found ourselves at the inner entrance to the chapel, where preparations for the service were being made. It was with some degree of surprise, as well as satisfaction, that we shortly found ourselves seated in the very best position for hearing, and I may add for seeing also, though that was of little consequence on this occasion.

We remained here upwards of half an hour, watching the arrival of the Cardinals in full canonicals, before the doors were thrown open and the eager crowd rushed in. It was, indeed, a terrible rush, and we had reason to congratulate ourselves on our good fortune. Yet this feeling lasted not with me beyond the first few notes of the service. Little should I have cared where I had been sitting or standing, so that my ears could have drunk in the melodious sounds, which ere long floated amid the white clouds of incense that filled the chapel.

In one of the pauses which occurred, I for the first time looked around me, and whom should I see standing at some distance from me, in the very midst of the crowd, but dear S——, her lovely face paler than ever with mingled fatigue and emotion. I instantly whispered to O—— to keep my place for an instant, and edging myself by degrees through the crowd, I insisted on S—— taking my seat. Scarcely was this arrangement completed, ere once again we were each



absorbed in the witching melody. The mighty building itself seemed to tremble with the full bursts which came ever and anon sweeping along, till aisle and arch were filled with sound. And yet it was not this that reached my very soul! No! it was one single voice,—a voice such as dreams of the music of the spheres might shadow forth. Now—soft and low, it seemed but its own sweet echo. Again—wild, free, clear, it soared on high, seeming to carry one away beyond the confines of earth, and there it floated like the very spirit of the place. Sometimes it was alone, and thus was its power even greatest; and then again the silvery notes rose clear and distinct above all other voices in the choir. Never once did I lose a tone of that which was most beautiful, where all were beautiful. I had been all this time so absorbed as scarcely to have glanced at those who were around me; and when at length I casually did so, little expected, certainly, that my interest was to be so strongly awakened in one of those who pressed against me in the densely crowded spot. Amid the many well-dressed and fashionable persons who thronged every seat and every standing place, and in striking contrast to them, I was attracted by a venerable looking old man, with hair as white as snow. He was partly supported by a staff on which he leaned, but his feeble limbs would have found it insufficient, had not a young girl lent her strength on the other side. His face was a noble one, spite of the ravages of time, and it might be of sorrow too. His apparel, though faded and almost bare, yet in its scrupulous neatness, spoke no less of decent care than of poverty. Indeed none could look upon him and doubt that once he had known other and brighter days. After I first observed him, I noticed that it was only when the voice resumed, which had already so enchained my own attention,

that he was moved. No matter how beautiful all else, his ear seemed closed, and his head bowed upon his trembling hands. But the moment the first and faintest tone of that *one* of surpassing sweetness fell on the ear, his whole frame awoke again to life and energy, and eagerly he endeavoured to press ever nearer to the narrow portion of the chapel in which alone the choir could be seen as well as heard.

I was much interested in the old man, and the gentle girl, who appeared divided between her anxious care for him and the same intense interest in that voice. I marvelled whether it was indeed its unrivalled power and sweetness that thus breathed life even into the feeble frame of this aged man,—that gave light to the eyes, and tinged with colour the faded cheeks of the girl, whose countenance in repose told a tale of labour and sorrow. Ere long I discovered that it was not alone the music which thus powerfully affected both. Once, when some change in the position of the singers caused a tall slight figure to stand nearer to the front of the gallery, the girl eagerly leaned forward, and looking intently on the pale face thus revealed, she whispered something to the old man, and he too fixed his eyes on the same form. And what a look of devoted affection was that! As he gazed, the big tears, all unconsciously as it seemed, rolled down his furrowed cheeks. During the next few moments, how many touching tales had I not woven, fitting adjuncts to such deep and tender affection! I scarcely heard any of the intermediate portions of the service, only the music gave impulse and colouring to the thoughts this unexpected incident had called forth. But a change came. Yet once more was that voice thrilling every heart—once more were its echoes wafted through the vast space around; and as I watched the face, but now so pale and calm and still kindled as it were by the glow of thought

which filled each note he uttered, and caught again the fixed look of the old man, whose eyes were lighted with responsive sympathy, it needed no vivid imagination to tell that it was on a loved, it might be an only son he thus looked. The voice melted away—the last, softest whisper was hushed—and the tall figure was gone. I turned to the old man and beheld him close his eyes for a moment, and then placing his hand within the arm of the young girl, I heard him murmur, as he slowly withdrew from the place, whilst a sigh seemed breathed from the very depths of his heart, "*E finito per me !*" I can scarcely tell how those sadly spoken words lingered on my ear,—I seem to hear them even now ! I almost feared to inquire about this father and son, lest some rude touch should efface the mental picture I had drawn of both. But I have since learned their real story ; and it is one which proves that the poetry and pathos of real life may be more deeply affecting than any tale of fiction.

The father was well-born, and with his two children had lived in luxury. They were a happy and united family, while the son was the idol of father and sister. His voice from infancy had been their delight and pride, and doubtless on many a moonlight eve, in their own fair home, had he sung to them the native airs of Italy. But, alas ! in an evil hour, and during one of those political outbreaks which so often have brought ruin and desolation on all concerned, they lost their all, and were cast helpless and neglected on the cold pitiless world. Former acquaintances lost sight of them : none knew whither they were gone : nor could any tell whence came the noble-looking youth who sought instruction previous to being received into the choir of St. Peter's. But no sooner were his preparatory exercises completed, and he had taken his place among that chosen band, than his exqui-

site voice was universally appreciated. His increasing fame brought gain as well as distinction, and he was enabled wholly to support his now aged parent and his only sister.

This was their history ; but not all : there is yet one touch of even deeper pathos. Very shortly after he entered on his arduous duties, he was told that his frame could not long support the physical exertion they demanded, while the exhaustion he felt, when the excitement which sustained him at the time passed away, too truly confirmed the fatal prediction. He knew he should soon die, unless he gave up at once his long cherished and now attained desire. And why does he hesitate ? Is it the sweet cup of fame that he has just raised to his lips that he cannot put aside ? Is it his enthusiastic love for those sacred melodies that flow like inspiration from him, that refuses to be controlled, even though his expiring breath should be given to them ? It is none of these ! On the breath of his lips, in very truth it may be said, depends the sole support of those he loves ! His aged father's life is fast drawing to a close : the sands are running low : and shall he prolong his own numbered days at the cost of even one of *his* ? No ! he would not suffer a whisper of his state to reach his father's ears. Is it wonderful, that while tears filled my eyes at this most touching tale, I recalled the old man's sigh, and thought of another and a sadder meaning which those murmured words might so soon bear—" *E finito per me !*"

THE CATACOMBS.



ACCORDING to an arrangement very kindly made for me, I one day accompanied S—— and some friends to the Catacombs.

Through their acquaintance with Dr. Grant, the head of the Scottish Roman Catholic College, and a very influential person, we obtained permission to visit one of these burial-places which had only lately been discovered and opened up, and from which, consequently, a great portion of the bodies had not been removed. We were the only Protestants who had been allowed as yet to enter, for usually, until the bodies and the various relics entombed with them, which are supposed to designate the remains of martyrs, have been removed, none but good Catholics are suffered to set foot within the sacred precincts. Of course the interest attaching to these remains was far greater in such a case as this ; since one not only saw the places where they had been laid, but in two instances, at least, we looked into the freshly opened tomb. Several times we saw the little phials which had been placed beside them, still red with what is supposed,

by those better able to determine the likelihood of such a point than I am, to be the blood of the saints of God slain in the cause of truth.

In the centre of a vineyard, some way beyond the walls, we came to a low door with an inscription over it, to the purport that none were to enter without the permission of those authorized to give it. Each of us in succession received a long wax-taper, the guide providing himself with several, and we proceeded in silence along the narrow vaulted passages. There was something awful in thus penetrating into the abodes of the dead. After a very little advance, we came to places where were the bones and skulls of those who had been buried there in times when even the tomb, unless thus concealed, secured not the senseless clay from the bitter fury of relentless persecutors. Sometimes there were three or four tiers or shelves on either side, entirely covered with these mouldering remains of mortality, and occasionally whole skeletons were to be seen.

Who could stand in such a place and not feel the very nothingness of earth and all its interests, its pleasures, pomp, and splendour, compared with the inheritance purchased by Him whose promises alone can take the sting from that king of terrors, whose ruthless power was evidenced at every step!

The guide stopped before a tomb, and Dr. Grant, calling us round him, pointed out the sign of a martyr's resting-place, —one whose very name at once carried the thoughts beyond the gloom and darkness of the grave, beyond even the fiery trial of the last earthly scene. A palm-branch was the chosen emblem; and was it not expressive! Was it not that sorrowing friends might dry the tears which dimmed the eye, and learn to look, in faith renewed and strengthened, into that heaven above where rest and triumph is now their por-

tion—to think of them there, clothed in “the white robes” which are “given them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony that they held,”—with crowns of gold upon their heads, and “palms in their hands,” crying, “Salvation to our God, who sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever!”

Dr. Grant directed the guide to take from several of these opened sepulchres of the martyrs a little roughly-formed lamp, which seems to have been placed beside each tomb, probably by those friends who may have lighted it when they visited the spot where those dear to them were laid,—when they came to “the grave to weep there.” Even this little earthen vessel seemed to speak of comfort, and to remind one, amid these dark and gloomy recesses, that where those blessed spirits now are, they need “no light, neither the sun nor the moon, for the Lord God doth give them light.” Dr. Grant gave us each one of these little lamps, and an interesting relic I shall ever regard it.

It was touching to notice marks of affection sometimes found recorded. On one marble slab was roughly, but legibly engraved,

“Flavius Filius carissimus.”

How strange was it to read words traced, in all probability, either at the time or very shortly after St. Paul yet lived and spoke in Rome! In many places crosses were the only mark upon the tomb,—an emblem then which it needed Christian courage and constancy to own!

MUSEUM OF THE CAPITOL.



THE Museum of the Capitol is a rich treasury of relics and works of art, gathered out of all ages and from all quarters.

Passing the Basalt Lionesses at the foot of the central steps, and the Columna Militaria, or first milestone of the Appian Way, we came to the noble equestrian statue of Marcus Aurelius, placed by Michael Angelo where it now stands. A precious relic of art is this sole specimen of an ancient equestrian statue in bronze ; and as one observes the dignity of the emperor's figure, as well as the bold free attitude of the horse, the admiration with which Michael Angelo regarded it is easily understood.

First, among the treasures of antiquity here assembled, must stand the Bronze Wolf of the Capitol, though certainly more to be noticed as an object of curiosity than of beauty.

Among the busts is one of Michael Angelo, which I looked at with interest, said to be sculptured by himself. The head

is of bronze, and the bust of white marble. This mixture of colour and material appears strange to the unaccustomed eye; and though there are several beautiful works of art so composed, yet their beauty, I am inclined to think, is in spite of such a mixture rather than because of it. I admired a statue, in Nero Antico, of Esculapius, and also two Centaurs found in Hadrian's Villa, which are greatly valued by antiquaries. In this same villa was also found the Mercury, called the Antinous, now in the Museum of the Capitol, which surpasses in beauty that in the Vatican, though it in its turn must yield the palm to one of the same name, crowned with lotus leaves, which adorns at this day the exquisite collection made by Winckelmann, at the Villa Albani. In one of the halls of sculpture there is a sarcophagus with bas-reliefs from ancient mythology. On one side is a group of figures, so full of life and passion as to exceed anything of the kind I ever saw. A soldier, belonging to the conquering army, is dragging an Amazon from her horse. The mingling of a courage which causes her still to struggle with her captor, with a hopeless despair beginning to steal over her, is portrayed with a power which gives the liveliest interest to the group.

But for me the Capitol possessed attractions apart even from its classic treasures and earliest associations. It was of Rienzi, that noble champion of freedom, I thought most in my visits here! I had already traced out the different localities connected with his eventful history. I had stood beside the ruins of his house,—had looked on the church which bore his first poetical appeal to the Roman people,—had followed him, in imagination, as he led them on to freedom, at the sound of the Great Bell of the Capitol. I had fancied him when his visions of power were realized, as he might have

trod the marble halls of the Colonna Palace, in the neighbourhood of which much of his humble youth was spent ; and now here before me was the celebrated table of Vespasian, on which, as the model of his own purposed laws and government, he explained to the haughty nobles the power of the people. And here, too, the lion which saw his wondrous triumph, and, alas ! witnessed also his cruel fall ! The only spot I scarce could look upon was the window in the Capitol at which he, Rienzi—but now their idol and their pride, asked only justice from his fellow-citizens, and asked in vain !

“ His reign was brilliant—like those meteor stars
Whose glory dazzles, falls, and disappears ;
Or like the transient lights in summer seen,
That flitting, leave no trace where they have been.”

With eager anticipation I entered the hall wherein is the dying Gladiator. What an instance of the wondrous power of sculpture is here displayed—its power of carrying the mind far beyond what the eye looks on ! It is not an impression of mere physical suffering that is made by the sight of that form ; neither is it admiration. Scarce a thought even of the marvellous faithfulness to nature which it exhibits can find a place. I only longed to see him lay him down to sleep—even though the sleep of death ! It is not bodily agony which marks those features and furrows that brow ; that is forgotten now ! He is withdrawn from all present feeling—all circumstances around. His thoughts are wandering far away. The quiet sadness of a mental farewell to beloved scenes and objects is softening and subduing his spirit, ere death's darkness sinks down upon him ! But no pen save his who has already told it, must touch that tale of anguish.

"He heard it, but he heeded not—his eyes
Were with his heart, and that was far away.
He reck'd not of the life he lost, nor prize ;
But where his rude hut by the Danube lay,
There were his young barbarians all at play ;
There was their Dacian mother—he, their sire,
Butcher'd to make a Roman holiday."

BRACCIANO.

April 5.



HIS day was fixed by D—— for a long-talked-of expedition to the Lake and Castle of Bracciano, about twenty-five miles from Rome. As we had to start very early, and could not return till long after sunset at any rate, W—— was obliged to give up the idea of going. M—— therefore called for me, and we proceeded to the Via Ripetta to take up Lady G——. At the Porta del Popolo we were joined by D——, who had been collecting his forces, and soon got under way. M——, Lady G——, and I, with Prince L——, were in one carriage; the rest of the party were in the M——s' barouche. The road to La Storta is good, and the four horses took us there in less than an hour. We there found relays of horses waiting for us, and soon after turned off the highroad.

The scenery meanwhile disappointed us all, being exceedingly barren and desolate, so we tried to console ourselves by being very agreeable to each other. Even the extreme badness of the road helped to relieve its tediousness, for it was

amusing to hear the exclamations that ever and anon broke forth involuntarily, as a tremendous jolt dashed us one against the other. For my own part, I could have dispensed with the amusement, for it soon became positively frightful ; and on one occasion even Prince L—— believed the carriage must be upset. Still we persevered, and with careful driving, and daylight to guide us, there was no actual danger. Not very far from Bracciano is the deserted town of Galera, above the valley of the Arrone. Many of its houses are built in the Gothic style of the thirteenth century, at which period it belonged to the Orsini family. The walls surrounding it, and some of the dwellings, are more than two centuries older. The site has been utterly deserted for many generations on account of malaria, so that it is now in ruins. The situation is very romantic, and there is something awful in the complete silence and desolation around. Not a single living creature of any kind is to be seen,—nothing but skeletons of houses, their gaunt outlines half hidden by the most luxuriant wreaths of ivy, wild vines, and tangled briars, whose graceful festoons seemed as though designed to deck the tombs of the victims who have perished there ! It is a striking instance of the power of this unseen agent of death, and reminded me of the lovely lake of Bolsena, whose shores are made desolate by the same scourge.

Beyond Galera, the road—if such a wild track may be dignified by the name—traverses a bare and dreary district, recalling both to me and to D—— many a wild heathery moor in Scotland. Indeed, for some time, we laughed at D——, and told him it was this resemblance to his beloved “Caledonia stern and wild” that had lent such energy to his praises of Bracciano, the wondrous attractions of which he had discovered during a hunt which had led him into its

vicinity. Farther and farther still we went, yet not only, as it seemed, no nearer Bracciano, but as far as ever from the beautiful scenery we were led to expect. At length, however, some of the party proclaimed the welcome intelligence that it was in sight ; and certainly a finer scene of the kind could not be easily imagined.

At some distance, on a very commanding eminence, rose the frowning battlements of this feudal castle. In bold relief against the sky the huge pile of building stood out ; and at its base we were soon able to distinguish a cluster of low houses forming a tolerably large village. A turn in the road brought us in sight of the lake, and at that moment all agreed that we were rewarded even for the long drive, the uninteresting country, and the worst of roads by which we had reached Bracciano.

The whole landscape was one peculiarly calculated to seize on the imagination, combining, as it did, so much to excite the fancy—carrying it back to feudal ages, and at the same time, so much of the exquisite softness and loveliness of an Italian scene.

The lake, which is in the immediate vicinity of the castle, is about twenty-five miles in circumference, but appeared to be more, from the misty haze which hung over the more distant parts. As we saw it first, it was clear and placid, without a ripple on its glassy surface, and only darkened by the deep shade of the castle or of the overhanging trees. The huge basin which contains this fine sheet of water, presents all the characteristics of an extinct crater, while its shores have all the picturesque variety and boldness which usually belong to volcanic rocks. It is supposed to be the *Lacus Sabatinus* of the Romans, and to have derived that name from the ancient Etruscan city, *Sabate*, said to have been submerged

by the water of the lake ; so that the time of its existence as a volcano must be distant indeed.

The castle assumed every moment a sterner and more magnificent grandeur as we approached, and began to wind up the tremendously steep eminence on the top of which it stands. So steep was the road, that after the first part had been accomplished, the horses refused to drag our carriage up the second, or rather were unable to do so, for the poor animals struggled hard, and almost fell ere they gave it up. Few things make me more nervous than the danger of a carriage rolling back, from obstinacy or want of power in the horses. On this occasion it would have been a serious matter, and therefore I gladly seized a moment when it was stationary to jump out, and help M—— to do the same. When every one had alighted, we walked to the vaulted entrance which led from the first large court which we had already reached, to the smaller one immediately around the castle. Nothing could more perfectly realize one's ideas of a feudal dwelling and feudal times than Bracciano ; and I was not surprised to learn that Sir Walter Scott had derived more pleasure from a visit to this castle than from almost any other place in Italy. Truly it seems well fitted for the scene of some wild, mysterious story of romance, such as he would weave.

The building stands on the rocky eminence,—almost a part of the rock itself, the side next the lake rising abruptly and perpendicularly from the water to the first terrace. Four lofty towers, each with a separate winding stair, and secret means of communication, rise from the four sides. The whole edifice is built of black volcanic stone, and its battlements, terraces, and Gothic windows are in good preservation. I have never before seen a building formed of stones of so black a colour, and doubtless this sombre hue increases the solemn

and imposing effect of its size, height, and impregnable strength. It looks a place for deeds of darkness and of dread.

In spite of the romantic ideas which I believe we all more or less indulged in, it was carried, without a dissenting voice, that we should first adjourn to the kitchen, and attack the stores of M. le Cuisinier, whom D—— had providently despatched some two or three hours in advance. The scene was not bad, as we all gathered round the various baskets, and seemed to afford infinite amusement to sundry men, women, and children, who had assembled to stare at the unwonted visitors. After we had recruited ourselves a little, D—— called a council of state to deliberate on the proceedings of the day. It was just half-past twelve o'clock, and as we had abundance of time before us, it was settled that the earlier we dined the better, as the roads in returning would be absolutely impassable in the dark. To meet every one's wishes, half-past three was named as the hour for assembling in the gloomy old hall, once more to make it resound with the mirth of an entertainment. This momentous point settled, we summoned a picturesque damsel as our guide among the winding stairs, and endless narrow passages, which promised to be not a little confusing. The views from the towers were really magnificent,—extending over a vast range of country. The richness and luxuriant beauty of the part immediately around the castle, especially on the side opposite to that by which we had approached, together with the glittering sheet of water spread out below, entirely relieved the barrenness of the far distance. The day, and the state of the atmosphere too, were peculiarly favourable for such a prospect. There was not a bright unclouded Italian sky, but fitful gleams of sunlight, casting a passing radiance on different parts of the

landscape, now revealing, now hiding them from view, with never-ending variety. There seemed a weight in the atmosphere that suggested fears of a coming storm, though an hour afterwards, when the sun again shone out for a little, we forgot our apprehensions, and extended our walk along the margin of the lake.

I was particularly struck with the view from one point here, the assemblage of objects was so much in character with the whole nature and associations of the place. It was a scene which Salvator Rosa would have chosen for his pencil. The black, frowning mass of building in the foreground ; the mysterious caverns to the right of the narrow gateway, from whence volumes of smoke rolled out and hung heavily in the air, while every now and then flashes of lurid flame burst through them, and human figures were seen flitting to and fro. In the distance, dark lowering clouds were creeping up from the west ; in front of us lay the waters of the lake in leaden stillness ; and the pine trees which here abound—those sombre children of the forest which always impart something of melancholy and of sternness to the landscape—stood motionless in the breezeless air. All was hushed, save at intervals, when there came a low soft sound, almost like a sigh of sorrow, as the wind, awaking for a moment, passed through the branches of the tall pines, and, dying in a distant murmur, left all again silent ! Any one who loves as I do that sorrowful yet soothing sound will appreciate those lines of Taylor's which naturally occurred to my memory :—

“ The Wind, when first he rose and went abroad
Through the waste region, felt himself at fault—
Wanting a voice, and suddenly to earth
Descended.
Where, wandering volatile from kind to kind,
He wooed the several trees to give him one.
.

. Lastly, the Pine
 Did he solicit, and from her he drew
 A voice so constant, soft, and lowly deep,
 That there he rested : welcoming in her
 A mild memorial of the ocean-cave
 Where he was born."

It was proposed that we should first go to the caverns we had observed, though we knew that the romance, with which we had invested them, would be dispelled as soon as the *iron-foundry*, which in fact they were, was reached.

From this we strayed on through the wildest, loveliest paths—flowers breathing perfume on every side,—now crossing a little pebbly brook flowing onwards to contribute its mite to the lake below,—now wandering in a shady wood, where the earlier trees had already put on the first bright hue of spring,—and then, again, climbing over rocks and huge masses of stone, hurled down by the torrent in its winter fury. The little glen we reached at length was a perfect garden of beauty. Large trees of myrtle, laurustinus, ilex, the Judas-tree with its lovely lilac flowers without leaves, and thousands of fruit-trees in full bloom, as in an English orchard in the month of May. We walked on till we reached the lake ; but whilst still lingering by its shores, gathering violets and many a lovely wild-flower, it began to rain, and we were forced to remember how far we had wandered. Meanwhile some donkeys were sent for to assist the wearied, but only one could be found, and that with a man's saddle. Upon this, however, by turns we mounted, managing to sit as best we might, with the help of the one short stirrup we could make use of,—Prince L—— acting as muleteer.

It was already long past the hour named for dinner when we reached the Castle, and even then further delay took place, so that it was nearly five o'clock before we sat down.

Rapidly passed the time, and it was six o'clock ere we be-thought ourselves how late it was. I was by no means comfortable, not only at the idea of travelling by that road in the dark, but from knowing how anxious W—— would be were we long delayed. As the rain still continued, it was arranged that we ladies should occupy the closed carriage, the gentlemen following in the barouche. On we went, tolerably well for about half an hour ; then came the first stoppage, which was made for the purpose of lighting the lamps. This done, we moved on again, but scarcely another half hour had passed when a second halt was called. By this time it was pitchy dark ; the short twilight had quickly passed, and was succeeded, not only by the darkness of night, but the blackness of a storm. And now down came the rain in torrents, whilst blacker and blacker closed in the heavy clouds. The post-boys declared they could not see their horses' heads, and would not stir an inch farther ;—a pretty plight truly to be in ! A wild black moor, uninhabited unless by bandits ; an almost impassable road ; a perfect hurricane of rain and wind, and presently a thunderstorm added to all else ! We had torches with us it is true, but vain were the most persevering efforts to kindle them. It was difficult to determine what was to be done. At last a star of hope, as it seemed to us, shone out in the distance, and as it drew nearer, proved to be the lamp in the *char-à-banc* of the cook, better placed, it would seem, for security against the storm than our own. The vehicle passed us as directed, and we found great advantage for a little while in following it ; but ere long,—borne to us by the wind, came sundry loud shouts, and looking back, we saw with dismay the barouche at some distance upset, as it appeared by the position of its two twinkling lights. In a few moments D—— ran up to tell us that a

carriage-spring had broken, but that they were all safe. The rain continued to pour in torrents, the thunder rolled, while every moment the heavens were illumined by vivid flashes of lightning. Of course, long before we could call out to stop it, the *char-à-banc*, with its guiding star, was far beyond recall. Suddenly a gust of wind, of extra violence, extinguished three of the lamps belonging to the two carriages, so that now one little flickering light was our forlorn hope. This was, indeed, a crisis in the adventure ! For full twenty minutes did D—— stand beneath the partial shelter of our ill-closed carriage, trying to relight the other lamps, succeeding at length just as patience, and a whole box of lucifer matches were alike all but exhausted ! But even when this was achieved there was the broken carriage to be patched up, so as at least to enable it to proceed. Once more we crept on, every instant expecting to share the fate of our companions, so tremendous were the jerks, whilst one or other of the horses was on the ground every few paces. Yet deliberate as our advance had been, great was the dismay on looking back, after a little while, to discover that our unhappy friends were no longer within sight ! Hereupon ensued a most edifying instance of the extreme coolness and nonchalance sometimes to be met with in Italian servants,—perhaps I should rather say in this class of them. At the very outset, Filippo, D——’s *laquais de place*, had shown considerable ingenuity in establishing himself in the snugest corner of the box, beneath the shelter of a huge umbrella, imperturbably maintaining his position all the time of the endeavour to light the lamps. But at such a moment as this, we of course expected he would feel called upon at least to go and see if he could be of any service to his master. Not a movement did he make. Finding it hopeless to expect any spontaneous act of

the kind, M—— quietly suggested,—“Filippo, pourquoi n'allez-vous pas voir ce qui en est ?” With an inimitable “E—eh !” he replied, “Madame, à quoi bon ? assurément je serais tout mouillé.” “Eh bien ! et que pensez-vous est M. le M—— ?” rejoined M——, with only too little severity, yet not expecting further delay. With indescribable nonchalance, and a shrug which in itself spoke volumes, he answered, “Ah, mais pour M. le M——, il a un bon manteau, lui ! le mien, voyez, c'est en chiffons !” It is nothing when simply related, and without the accompaniment of the scene, the voice, the manner. Though excessively annoyed, and anxious about the missing carriage, it was scarcely possible to refrain from laughing at such perfection of cool selfishness. Notwithstanding, I soon took it upon myself to inform Monsieur Filippo, that if he did not descend instantly, M. le M—— should hear of it. This produced the effect of causing him slowly to raise himself from his seat ; and grumbling out something, in which “Bracciano” and “inferno” seemed in very emphatic juxtaposition, he at length proceeded towards the carriage, just as it was approaching.

It would be tedious to enumerate all the stoppages which took place, but at last the rain ceased, the storm died away, the stars looked out on the deep and quiet night, and ere long we learned, with thankfulness, that we had reached La Storta.

There the broken carriage was exchanged, and fresh horses and smooth roads relieved us from all our discomforts. In little more than an hour we entered Rome, and having dropped Lady G——, Prince L——, and Mr. H——, at their respective abodes, we drove to Capo le Case, where most gladly I alighted at my own. It was between one and two o'clock in the morning.

RECEPTION IN THE COLONNA PALACE.



THROUGH D——'s acquaintance with the Prince Torlonia, who by the way is also Duca di Bracciano, and possessor of that noble baronial castle, we received an invitation to a grand "reception" in the Palazzo Colonna, given in honour of a member of that family, who had just been raised to the dignity of Cardinal.

On these occasions, it is customary for the nearest relative to give a series of such entertainments, for the purpose of introducing the Cardinal elect. The first is usually the most magnificent, as then the noble families in Rome are present, in all the array of full dress, diamonds, orders, and such like.

We thought ourselves fortunate in seeing, on so brilliant an occasion, the Colonna Palace, which possesses the most splendid hall in Rome. Moreover, the lovely Princess Torlonia, a near relation to the new Cardinal, was to do the honours of the evening, and, by her well-known grace and beauty, to give, as we anticipated, a perfect finish to the whole.

I had agreed to chaperone O—— and A—— M——, and

accordingly called for them about eight o'clock in the evening. The street leading to the palace, and the court before it were lighted up, and bands of military music were performing; the whole wearing a gay and festive appearance. Ascending the wide marble stairs common to all Italian palaces, and passing through the vast halls, we came to the suite of rooms in which the numerous attendants were ready to receive and announce the arrival of the guests. In the third of these stood the beautiful hostess and the new Cardinal. Never did I behold a more dazzling form than that of the Princess! Her diamonds were almost of fabulous magnificence and number. A tiara of matchless splendour encircled her brow, while *épis* of corn fastened up the luxuriant plaits of hair behind. Rows of these gems were round her throat and arms, while a girdle of smaller ones confined at the waist the gorgeous dress she wore, terminating in a cord and tassels which reached nearly to her feet. With every graceful movement, gleams of dazzling brilliance flashed from her, and yet withal her own beauty shone with only the purer lustre amidst it; and more beautifully bright than any diamonds were her eyes, lighted up with pleasure and kindly feeling, as she came forward to welcome her guests.

After a few words from the host and hostess, addressed to each, we advanced to the great hall; and surely of all the scenes of magic splendour which one has seen or read of, nothing could well surpass this as it opened upon us!

The hall itself, upwards of one hundred and fifty feet in length, is lined with beautiful marbles, while transverse rows of pillars of *giallo antico* portion off a kind of raised vestibule at either end. Thousands of wax-lights were ranged along the walls, and clustered round the columns,—the polished marble reflecting them again and again as in a mirror.

Several of the other Princesses wore very splendid diamonds also ; those of the Princess Borghese were particularly fine, and tastefully arranged. The innumerable lights brought out the refulgence of the sparkling gems, and when to these were added the variety and beauty of the dresses, amid **which** the extraordinary richness of the Hungarian costume, worn by several noblemen, was conspicuous, as were several others marking the official rank or nationality of the wearer, the effect, in splendour and gay colouring, was indeed perfect.

It was beneath the radiance of these countless lights of which I have spoken, that we saw the pictures in this gallery ; and though not by any means a fine collection, some there were which seemed fitly to adorn it. I was struck with one in a style I do not usually care for, but on this occasion it seemed apposite. It was a cabinet of rich jewels and objects of virtù, represented with wonderful fidelity ; and as I looked on the gems which flashed around, I could almost believe that those before me in the picture sparkled as really as they.

THE VATICAN PICTURES AND FRESCOES.



HAVING already a memorandum of the Statuary in the Vatican, as seen by torchlight, I shall not again refer to it, but go at once to that room which contains five paintings,—each possessing a world-wide fame.

1st, *The Transfiguration*, by Raphael. Very peculiar interest must this picture excite as the last production of the illustrious Master.

None can so well relate the circumstances which connected it with his death and funeral, as the poet whose spirit is so deeply imbued with all that is beautiful in Italy, whether in its works of art or its scenes of nature.

The painting was hung over his bier, as the body of the artist lay in state, previous to its burial.

“ And when all beheld
Him where he lay, how changed from yesterday ;
Him in that hour cut off, and at his head
His last great work ; when entering in, they look'd
Now on the dead, then on that masterpiece—
Now on his face, lifeless and colourless,

Then on those forms divine, that lived and breathed,
 And would live on for ages ;—all were moved,
 And sighs burst forth and loudest lamentations."

ROGERS.

The upper division of the picture is the most beautiful: the centre figure is that of the Saviour. Truly would it seem as though the pencil of the painter had been dipped in the essence of light, so powerfully has he represented the effulgence and visible glory of Him whose "face did shine as the sun," and His raiment became "white as the light." The figures of the two Prophets who "talked with him," and of the three Disciples, who seem overwhelmed with the heavenly vision, are admirably represented.

The lower compartment draws one down again to earth with all its sorrows and sufferings. One of the most prominent figures is a lad possessed with an evil spirit, whom his father is bringing to the disciples to see if they can cure him.

2*d*, The Madonna di Foligno, to which the most elaborate description could do no justice,—for the charm of the picture lies in the exquisite expression of gentleness and softness in the countenances of the Virgin, and of the attendant Angel: indeed, I think the latter must well-nigh be the most perfect realization of pure and heavenly beauty ever wrought by the pencil.

3*d* and 4*th*, The subject of these two is the Coronation of the Virgin. To me, neither of them, however fine as paintings, possessed any interest. But again my warmest admiration was called forth by the 5*th*, "The Communion of St. Jerome," by Domenichino. This is undoubtedly his *chef-d'œuvre*; and well may the Bolognese school boast of producing such a masterpiece. The scene is evidently supposed to be in Syria;

the Arab attendant and the Lion identify it with that land. St. Jerome, worn out with age and infirmity, pale and emaciated, is feebly kneeling in lowly humility at the altar ; and bending over him, with an expression of reverence and love, as he administers the consecrated elements, is St. Ephraim, clothed in the robes of the Greek Church. The emotions depicted in the countenances and attitudes of each, as well as in those of the youth who kneels with his gaze fixed on the dying Father, and of the female saint who is pressing her lips upon his thin hand—are what peculiarly constitute the high excellence of this picture. But, in addition, the whole possesses the richest and most gorgeous colouring, remarkable especially in the *Dalmatica* worn by the Deacon who stands beside the Bishop bearing the cup.

From the Picture Gallery we passed on, by long and spacious corridors, to that part of the Vatican called the four Stanze of Raphael. These contain some of the finest productions of this great Master. First there is the Camera della Segnatura, the four walls of which are painted with the following subjects:—1. Theology ; 2. Poetry ; 3. Philosophy, or the School of Athens ; 4. Jurisprudence. It is impossible to describe the separate beauties of each, so I shall only mention more particularly the one I liked best—"Philosophy."

Not only is the whole conception of this most admirable, but it presents at once to your eye the persons of all the famous men of those days, with their individual characteristics. It represents a large hall, wherein are assembled the leaders of the various schools of philosophy, with their disciples. A flight of steps raises the more distant figures ; and you behold Plato and Aristotle standing in the centre, as if disputing on their doctrines. Plato points upwards with uplifted arm ; Aristotle stretches his hand towards the earth. At each side


is a line of attentive hearers : near them, towards one side of the picture, stands Socrates, explaining to a group of listeners something in order, as it seems, for he is counting on his fingers. Opposite, other persons are engaged in study or in conversation. On the left, in the foreground, as the great representative of Arithmetic, is Pythagoras, writing with a folio on his knee. On the right, Archimedes constructs a geometrical figure on a tablet which lies upon the ground : while several scholars watch its progress with interest ; the different degrees of their intelligence represented most vividly. Next to these are Zoroaster and Ptolemy, representing respectively astronomy and geography, with celestial and terrestrial globes ; while before them on the steps, apart from all others, reclines Diogenes the Cynic. Near the edge of the picture, Raphael himself enters the hall, in company with his master Perugino.

The ceiling in the Sistine Chapel contains Michael Angelo's celebrated Frescoes ; representing, in four separate parts, the Creation and Fall of Man, with its immediate consequences.

1. The representation of the Creation of the Sun and Moon, supposed to be one of the most sublime ever conceived of the subject ; but for myself I do not like any such attempts to represent the embodied presence of God the Father—though doubtless none has ever equalled this. We see him assigning the two great orbs their places ; but even as I looked, I thought how far more sublime is the conception conveyed by the simple words : "Let there be light ; and there was light." This mere fiat of the will Omnipotent, is surely far more godlike than such ideas as the painting calls forth.—2. The Awakening the first Man to Life. In this, Adam's figure and countenance are admirable ; and there is a force of expression, and a depth of thought in the whole scene, very striking

indeed.—3. The Fall of Man, and his Expulsion from Paradise. The Tree of Knowledge stands in the centre, the Serpent is twined round the stem, and bends towards the guilty pair, as though to triumph in what is going on. The figure of Eve is most lovely. In another part of the scene, though close to the Serpent, hovers the Angel with the sword of vengeance. In this union of the two moments, we seem to see the sin and its punishment at once.—4. The Deluge. A wonderful picture, but too elaborate to be described, as, indeed, are the other parts of this celebrated ceiling. I must, however, at least name the famous fresco on the end wall, of the “Last Judgment,” which Michael Angelo commenced in his sixtieth year. He began it for Clement VII., and finished it in seven years, during the pontificate of Paul III. It is a most extraordinary work of art,—marvellous in the variety of form and attitude among the countless figures it contains. But its extent and intricacy of arrangement render anything like description out of the question.

VILLAS.

ow lovely is this fresh spring-time, and how sweet the young beauty with which it decks the crumbling palaces, the fallen pillars, the ruined towers of the ancient city !

It has stolen on me with a sweet surprise. I was wont to think of Rome rather beneath the rich dyes of autumn,—with its evanescent glory, here so fit a type:—its mournful tones ; its chill and sighing breeze that seems to mourn over the beauty it is commissioned to destroy ;—to think of it, —now lighted up for a brief moment with a crimson flush, like the hectic glow on the cheek of fading health, or the short-lived smile upon the face of sorrow,—now sad, pale, and cold, shrouded in the wintry garb of a mourner. It was thus that I had dreamt of Rome ;—but now I see her with a rich and lavish adornment: the wide Campagna clothed as with a gay and holiday attire: the broken arches of the several aqueducts hung about with festoons: the mouldering tombs garlanded with tresses of the wild vine, and fringed with light and feathery sprays of celandine, half concealed by the

clustering luxuriance of the leafy drapery, as though, where all is redolent of life, it behoved that these pale spectres of the past should be hidden out of sight.

The trees have all put on their fairest garments. The pink stems and polished leaves of the tamarind; the dark shining green of the cork and the ilex, with their rough gnarled branches twisted into every variety of fantastic form; the willow, bending over its own shadow, in graceful contrast; the olive—one of Italy's own fruitful and poetic trees—with its old grey knotted trunk and hoary hue, which, even in that bright spring, sobers the gaiety of the foliage around, tempering all glaring colours, and harmonizing as with a soft and neutral tint the contrast between the sapphire blue of sky and sea, and the emerald green of her fairer sisters of the forest. Even the grand old pines, so stern and joyless, seemed to wear a smile, like age wooed by rosy childhood: while round and round upon the circling hills the shadows chased each other as in sport,—now darkening over some far-off Alban village on its mountain site,—now revealing its white houses through a veil of purple light, like pearls glittering from their amethyst setting, then melting into that mellow light—that silvery haze—which gives such wondrous beauty to the distant landscapes of this clime.

But not alone on the far-off hills, on the fragrant shrubs, and on the fresh untainted hues of the foliage is this lavish outpouring of spring's beauty to be found. It is not less upon the luxuriant turf, amid mosses soft and bright as though for fairy feet alone to press, that this wealth of loveliness is scattered! There are the ruby-coloured anemones, the sapphire violet and hyacinth, the pearl-like daisies, the trembling, quivering celandine—each tiny branch an emerald spray, the turquoise blue of the forget-me-not—alike dear in

all lands to remembrance and association, the dew-drops for diamonds,—all forming such mosaic-work as never did Florentine or Venetian equal! And the gladsome birds, how they too carolled in the fulness of their joy, as though conscious that these were Nature's happiest holidays! It pleased me, on such a day as this, to stand and look upon one of those wonderfully beautiful frescoes which seem almost to reflect the ærial tints of an Italian sky, so fitly does the pencil reproduce them. Such a clime needed such an art, with its graceful airy style, with the soft yet gorgeous richness of its colours, above all, of that deep peculiar blue which nothing but fresco-painting can give.

In the casino of the Rospigliosi Palace is that beautiful personification of spring—the “Aurora” of Guido. In truth it is the very poetry of painting! Her youthful, joyous face and airy figure, as she floats upon the azure sky, scattering flowers on the earth below,—the pliant gracefulness of motion,—with all around so fresh, so glowing with the glad sunshine of early morning, one can fancy the dew-drops lingering yet upon those falling flowers, and the sweetness of their breath diffused upon the air.

Even as I lingered there, a faint whisper came to me from days that are gone! Long years have rolled on since first I heard of this painting. How often have I listened entranced to the voice that was sweet to me as a mother's, while with rarest powers of description it awoke my childish interest in this fair land, and its treasures of art and beauty! That building, those gardens, each object on which my eye now rested, all were associated with her whose home was once here, and with those who passed many of childhood's brightest hours amid these scenes!

Another such lovely day was spent at the Villa Ludovisi.

It is very difficult to gain admission to this Villa, and of course it is all the more sought after. M——, however, had a *carte-blanche* order for admittance, so that I went more than once. The gardens belonging to it are shady and pleasant, with walks through an olive wood, which pleased me better than the usual stiff and formal parterres. But the chief attraction is Guercino's "Aurora." In this fresco the goddess is represented in a triumphal car, from which she is strewing flowers. Daybreak is personified by a youth with an extinguished torch. It is undoubtedly very beautiful, but should be seen before, not after, that of Guido.

The Sculpture Gallery contains several fine statues; but I shall name only one. It is a very noble colossal head, known as the Ludovisi Juno. In general, I do not feel much admiration for sculpture on so immense a scale, unless so placed as to be brought down to ordinary proportions by corresponding vastness in all around; but this must rank as an exception. The combination, in that countenance, of calm majesty and commanding dignity, with feminine softness and grace, impressed me as a very rare and happy mingling of the beautiful and the sublime in moral expression; and I could not but own that the very size and grandeur of those colossal proportions tend still more to heighten such an effect.

Perhaps the most attractive of the villas in the neighbourhood of Rome is the Albani. It is a little way beyond the Porta Salara, and was built by Cardinal Albani. The design was entirely his own; and one cannot but acknowledge it to be a fitting casket for the gems of sculpture it contains, and which he spent a lifetime in collecting. The Portico, or Arcade, as it is better called, supported by twenty-eight pillars of the rarest marbles, opens upon a garden most tastefully laid out, ornamented with fountains and terraces, gay

with a rich luxuriance of roses and flowers of every hue, while beyond it is a semicircle of columns, statues, and vases. In this splendid Arcade, suitably placed, and arranged so as to show each to the greatest advantage, are most choice groups and figures in statuary, nearly all of them well known to fame. Two columns of extreme beauty ornament the long gallery through which one passes into the lower rooms. One of these is of solid alabaster, and antique; the other of jasper. Here is also a sarcophagus of white marble, rendered exceedingly precious by the bas-relief upon it of the Marriage of Peleus and Thetis, which is said to be one of the six finest in the world.

The celebrated Apollo Sauroctonos of Praxiteles, spoken of with rapture by Winckelmann, adorns a hall hung round with tapestries from Flemish designs. But in the Galleria Nobile is the gem of the collection—the “Antinous”—which I have already named as surpassing in beauty both its rivals. It is distinguished from the latter by a wreath of lotus leaves, and perhaps the freshness and exquisite finish of this leafy crown adds to the grace of the whole.

The Gallery is itself magnificent. On the ceiling is the Parnassus of Raphael Mengs, a beautiful fresco. The walls are ornamented with bas-reliefs and mosaics, the latter chiefly from Hadrian's Villa, and exceedingly beautiful. These are a few of the very many objects more or less deserving of notice in this charming Villa. Nor are there wanting delightful views from the windows. Looking over a foreground of flowers and fountains, the eye rests upon the city, its domes and towers glittering in the sun, on the one hand; and on the plain, and distant purple-clad mountains, on the other.

THE MISERERE.



It is matter of regret to me that I have been unable to keep a record of many of the Ceremonies of the Romish Church, which I have had opportunities of witnessing during our sojourn in Rome. The general impression left by them on the mind is a very decided one: they realize, as no mere description can, the perilous fascination which it is their manifest object to throw over the enthusiastic, by the dazzling accessories of this gorgeous and deluded worship. Now, however, that we have heard the Miserere, I must no longer allow my pen to be silent, but try to secure some memorial of the feelings called forth by the most overpowering music I ever listened to.

Everything connected with the services of the Church, especially during the Holy Week, is managed with such dramatic effect, that I was fully prepared to find here also, that the simple power of the music would be greatly indebted to the solemn and exciting character of the accompaniments of light, scene, and ceremony. But truly it is, above and

independently of all such, the most strangely effective and overpowering musical composition I ever listened to. The first time we heard it was in a very commonplace concert-room. The following day we listened to it in the Sistine Chapel, amid a suffocating heat and crowd, and without the possibility of seeing anything more interesting than the back of the Austrian Ambassador's box. But it was enough that I could hear—that I could close my eyes and give up my heart and soul to the spell-like power of that unearthly harmony. The Choir of the Vatican contains some of the finest and most effective voices in the world, and the execution on such occasions is all that thorough training and first-rate science can make it. With the performance then, and the simple music itself, in the Sistine, I was astonished and charmed more than I ever was by sounds before; especially, perhaps, by the execution of a passage from the "Lamentations," in which the prophet, as the voice of God, makes that touching appeal to Israel, ere yet her day of calamity has overtaken her: "Oh, my people! what have I done unto thee? O Jerusalem! return unto the Lord thy God." This passage is performed by a single voice of marvellous expression and clearness; and though sustained within the range of but two or three notes, yet, with its infinite variety of swells, shakes, and cadences, breathes forth, with the most perfect truth, the passion and spirit of the words. But the impression even of this was partly effaced and overshadowed by what followed. On descending to St. Peter's, we found, to our satisfaction, that we were in time to hear this glorious music repeated in the great Temple itself; and heightened as the *scenic* effect there was by every concomitant of time, place, light, and arrangement, never while I live shall I forget that hour! The service being performed was what is

called "The Tenebræ." A pyramid of lights, to the number of fifteen, is placed behind the altar in the side Chapel of the Virgin, where the service is conducted. At the conclusion of each psalm chanted one of these is extinguished—symbolical, I have been told, of the desertion of the Saviour by his disciples and friends in the hour of his last agony. When this was concluded, none of the lights, save a solitary one over the high altar, remained. The Chapel, with its richly gilded ceiling, fretted arches, and carved projections, supporting those white spirit-like figures, in rapt and fervent attitudes of devotion, was now filled and softened with that incensed atmosphere, that soft mysterious twilight, which so excites the imagination, and serves to cast over such scenes a hallowed spell, which the ruder glare of noonday disenchants. There was a brief pause—a breathless silence; and then broke upon the ear, softly, tremblingly, the first long wild wailing note of the "Miserere!" Amid the indistinctness and deepening gloom of all around, it seemed to come—one knew not whence—from earth or air! 'Twas as though the very essence of plaintiveness had been breathed forth from some wounded heart, and were flitting away on viewless wings to seek for rest or sympathy! It appeared to die in distance, —then rose a fuller swell of several voices, clear, steady, and prolonged; and while these in their turn, one by one, dropped off, the notes were taken up by others, louder, fuller still, as the hymn went on—blending, interchanging, crossing, uniting with each other, in all the variety of chords, minors, semitones, that the compass and combination of sounds can produce; and forming the strangest, sweetest medley of expressive harmony that ever human heart conceived! There were times when the voices seemed to *part* from each other in a most peculiar manner, producing a kind of soft and

melancholy discord ; each note running out on its own separate key of plaintiveness—as it were each sorrowing spirit carried away and absorbed by its own individual grief: some as though sighing forth the low monotone of a speechless woe—some as though uttering the mingled broken eloquence of a heart disburdening itself in prayer and confession ;—others rising and echoing round the vaulted roof in the long shrill cry of pain and mental anguish ; and then suddenly, as if all had found some common ground of mourning and of sympathy in suffering, they would softly blend and flow into each other, till united in one full rich tide of soothing harmony, like the calm of a settled but profoundest sorrow. In a word—each depth of feeling, each variety of changing mood, every shade and characteristic of penitential grief, humility, self-abasement, seemed there to speak the fulness of the heart, in pathos more intense than any words could utter. And what a medium it must be that can thus give the meaning of that universal language of communion between the humbled sinner and his God—the fifty-first Psalm—of which the “Miserere” principally consists ! It seemed to me, that if ever, since the Monarch Minstrel of Israel swept, with inspired touch, the chords of his harp, and breathed forth these holy thoughts before the throne of Jehovah, music has been found fitly adapted to such a prayer, it must be this ! The deep abasement of a heart wounded and convicted of sin,—the unjustifying self-condemnation of a contrite spirit before its Judge,—“I acknowledge my transgression, and my sin is ever before me ;”—the fear, the felt incapacity for any good, the clear view of Divine Justice driving almost to the dark verge of despair : “Cast me not away from thy presence, take not thy Holy Spirit from me.” And then the bright ray of hope and comfort breaking through from the

redeeming love of a Father reconciled : "Have mercy upon me, O God ; according to the multitude of thy tender mercies !" "A broken and a contrite heart thou wilt not despise." This theme of an infinite love has power at length to bring a balm, and wipe away the tear ; and this varied and wonderful hymn of devotion concludes with one burst of joyful triumph, and confidence restored to the drooping spirit : "Make me to know joy and gladness ; do good in thy good pleasure unto Zion ; build thou the walls of Jerusalem !"

It was all deeply, powerfully affecting ; and cold must he be, and unsusceptible indeed, who can listen to this strange and thrilling music without eyes suffused, and a heart that beats quicker in its sympathy ! It was some moments after the last note had died away ere I could recall my absorbed and spell-bound faculties, and with a sigh, almost of relief, turned and left the spot.

INTERVIEW WITH THE POPE.



CIRCUMSTANCES having interfered with my accompanying our friends the R——s when they had an interview with the Pope, I agreed shortly afterwards to chaperone two young ladies, if we could obtain an audience. It was generally thought there was no chance of this, as the ceremonies of the "Holy Week" had commenced, and the aged Pope suffered much from fatigue. We were fortunate, however, in possessing the good-will of one of the most influential persons at the Vatican, the Abbé H——, who not only arranged the desired interview at our request, but himself accompanied us.

We received orders to wear black dresses, and a hint that a black veil was deemed the most appropriate head-dress. When the carriage stopped at the entrance to the Vatican, we were conducted up the famous staircase called the Scala Regia, a noble monument of the genius of Bernini. Stopping at the head of the first flight of steps, a door was opened, and we were received by several gentlemen, who ushered us

along a line of Swiss guards in their fantastic garb, into a gallery where are the far-famed cartoons of Raphael. Here we were requested to wait until the Pope was disengaged. In such a place delay could scarcely be tedious, and almost before we had even glanced at several of the pieces of tapestry, we were summoned into the presence of Gregory XVI. He was dressed more like a monk than a sovereign prince, with a close-fitting vest of white cashmere or some such material, a crimson badge on one arm, and a kind of loose cloak with a hood which hung at the back. Upon his head was a small skull-cap of crimson velvet ; but, as I said before, nothing to mark the wearer of the triple crown. His face was somewhat full, and with a heavy expression,—more characterized I should say by benevolence than intelligence. He was standing beneath a canopy of crimson velvet, and a carpet of the same material was laid down just where he stood, leaving the rest of the room uncovered. There was no furniture save a chair of state beneath the canopy, in front of which he stood, and a small table with a silver inkstand on it. The walls, however, were ornamented with a few cabinet pictures of great beauty and value.

We were directed to courtesy three times as we advanced, which we did with all due solemnity. He received us very kindly, and, as it was a private reception, with little of form or ceremony. We were told he rather enjoyed seeing English ladies in this quiet way, especially if they are introduced by any of his personal friends. Our names being repeated, we advanced near him, and he addressed us individually. He never speaks but in Italian, so that it was rather awful, considering my but recent renewal of acquaintance with that language, to be obliged to answer his queries. Fortunately, he took most of the conversation upon himself. He asked

me, however, what I thought of Rome, of St. Peter's, and of the Miserere which had been performed the previous day ; questioned me of my home ; how we had performed the journey from England, and such like. I named the railway among other modes of travelling, and was glad I had done so, as it called forth the most characteristic expression of opinion with which we were favoured. In the most energetic manner, he declared his dislike of railways ; adding, that though he doubted not when he was "sotto terra" railways would speedily be introduced into the Papal States, yet that as long as he lived not one should be permitted.

Poor old man ! he little thought how short a span of his life remained. In less than one month from that date he was no more !

As he addressed a few words to my companions, my eye fell on the embroidered slipper on the left foot, which the "faithful" are privileged to kiss. In a few moments more he made a signal to one of his attendants who stood by, and turning to each of us successively, bowed very graciously, and we withdrew, walking backwards for a few steps. Meanwhile he retired through a door hidden by some tapestry ; and then we were allowed to turn round.

On leaving the reception-room, we were each presented with a small alabaster rosary, blessed by his Holiness, which I keep as a memento of my interview with him.

We were told rather an interesting anecdote concerning this Pontiff, which I have good reason to believe true. A lady, more full of zeal than discretion, left England and went to Rome, with one fixed object in view,—the conversion of the Pope. She sought and obtained an interview with him, and, by way of overwhelming him at once, put before him the infinite presumption of which he must be guilty in

setting himself up as the infallible teacher of Christendom. He listened to her calmly for some time, and then said, "I thank you, madam, for your zeal in my behalf. Believe me, not a day of my life passes that I do not humble myself before my God, feeling and knowing myself to be a sinner, and asking forgiveness. But having said this, allow me to ask *you* if your own spirit is a right one, and if the mission you have now undertaken shows *yourself* to be possessed of that true humility, which, as you have well said, must be the foundation of Christianity." It is not difficult to believe what was added,—that the romantic lady was so melted by the meekness and forbearance of his Holiness, that she herself became a decided convert to Popery !

ILLUMINATION OF ST. PETER'S.



THE multitudinous observances of the Holy Week, however gorgeous and imposing to witness, are but little interesting in mere description, and besides are now so familiar to almost every one, that even their bare enumeration would be tedious. One thing struck me forcibly, as characterizing them all—whether ceremonies, processions, or solemn masses—and that was, the perfect manner in which each individual engaged in them performs his part. However intricate, however elaborate that part may be, whether vocal intonations, or corporeal movement, whether in the capacity of principal or subordinate,—nothing awkward, nothing ludicrous seems ever to occur, so as to mar the impression designed to be made. The measured reverential step, the set solemnity of feature, the easy graceful self-possession of the most humble official, are all as perfect in their place and way, as those of the most exalted dignitary. In truth these Italians seem to possess an intuitive perception of what is dignified, graceful, and appropriate in all such enactings of

pomp and ceremony, which a whole lifetime of drilling could not instil into our sturdy Englishmen.

And here I cannot help saying, that in truth the contrast between the two nations, on these occasions, is often most peculiarly and painfully marked. The conduct of the Italians, even of the lower orders, at such times of public concourse, is almost invariably gentle, good-humoured, and courteous; while that of too many of our own fellow-countrymen—even in Italy, where it is to be supposed the higher and better educated alone are to be found—is frequently as remarkable for overbearing rudeness, and indecent disregard to the feelings and habits of the people among whom they are mingling. Above all, during the Easter Week, there is a large proportion of the sight-loving English community in Rome, which appears somewhat to forget that it professes to represent, among these poor Roman Catholics, a more enlightened and Christianized nation. I fancy it must partly result from the over-wrought excitement consequent upon the frantic rushing, scrambling, and importuning that takes place on all hands among them, to secure tickets, orders, &c., for admission to the different ceremonies, and most favourable places for seeing them. I shall not soon forget the spectacle I witnessed at the celebration of the *Cæna*, when the Pope in person goes through the form of girding himself, and ministering with his own hands to the very hearty appetite of some twelve or twenty poor pilgrims seated at table. The body of the hall was crowded, principally with Englishmen, as densely wedged together as the strength of hundreds desperately pushing from the outer sides of the human mass could make it. Again and again, during the ceremony, long after the fruitlessness of such attempts became obvious, did those farthest off continue to struggle towards the object of attraction,

which fortunately, being raised on a strong platform, was only thus saved from a violence which would speedily have overborne Pope, supper-table, pilgrims and all. Yells, groans, and fiercest execrations burst incessantly from the swaying and labouring throng; nor was I surprised to learn that several had not only fainted with terror and exhaustion, but that some had received severe bodily injuries. And these were our countrymen, exhibiting their superior enlightenment and civilisation at a Catholic religious ceremony! I made my escape in disgust, before the obstreperous multitude rushed forth, probably to repeat the scene in some other place.

The spectacle which I enjoyed incomparably more than any other during Easter, was that which is reserved for the evening of its close,—the Illumination of St. Peter's. This magnificent exhibition is provided at the expense of Government on this and one or two other occasions annually, for the gratification of the people. The evening was fortunately calm and delicious. For the purpose of securing a favourable place within the great piazza, we drove down early, and drew up where we had a full view of the façade of the edifice, and the curve of the colonnade on either side. It was already dusk, and the first part of the illumination had commenced. This consists of innumerable lamps, so disposed over every portion of the stupendous building, as to trace out, in lines of pale silvery light, every feature, ornament, and proportion of its beautiful architecture. As the twilight disappeared, and the evening advanced, the effect became more and more fairy-like. To close the eyes for a moment, was to leave the impression on the mind, not so much of a reality as of the brilliant vision of a dream! Or, when steadily gazing at it, I could have fancied that some great clustering constellation,

in unbroken form of beauty, had fallen from heaven to earth. For nearly two hours we continued in the untiring enjoyment of the novel scene, amusing ourselves occasionally by conversing with passing acquaintances, or by observing the ecstasies of admiration and delight in the groups of common people around us. As the clocks in the neighbourhood sounded the first stroke of nine, the busy hum of human voices was hushed in one instant into the stillness of breathless anticipation: and almost ere the second stroke vibrated on the ear, beside each one of those silvery lamps, as by the touch of an unseen magician, leapt up a flame of golden brilliancy! Along each gallery, cornice, and pediment, around each window, column, and capital, over each dome and cupola, up to the very pinnacle of the gigantic cross that towered into the sombre sky above, ran, with the swiftness of an ignited train of gunpowder, the invisible agent, pencilling, in lines of glowing fire, against the dark heavens as a background, the matchless symmetry of the glorious structure! With a ruddy glare of unearthly light upon them, the tall statues looked down from the lofty colonnade. The great fountains playing in the piazza seemed to catch the fiery influence around, and to shower forth living sparks instead of the wonted drops of crystal!

As we drove from the spot, and crossed the bridge into the city, every object as we passed along stood out in a strong and steady light. The huge mass of the Castle St. Angelo, the tall gaunt houses along the margin of the river, the countenances of thousands of human beings, clustered together at every point whence the gorgeous spectacle might best be seen, all were as distinct as in the light of noonday. When we had ascended to the highest terrace of the Pincian Hill, which completely overlooks the city, the appearance of

the illumination was, if possible, still more striking. The elevation is sufficient to clear the view of St. Peter's from all that labyrinth of streets and houses which beset it closely on the public side of approach, while the distance enables the eye to take in fully the proportions of the edifice and its colonnade, which from their vastness can be comprehended, on a nearer view, only in detail. From the point on which we now stood not only was the whole visible, but with a new and most peculiar effect. The distance, together with the dazzling of the countless lights themselves, completely hid the solid material of the edifice, so that what we now beheld was the skeleton framework of a St. Peter's elaborately constructed of those vivid lines of light!

Until within the last few years there was, on this annual occasion, an *interior* illumination of the building. A cross of gigantic proportions was suspended from the inside of the great dome, immediately over the high altar, and covered with thousands of brilliant lamps. The gorgeous splendour of the effect thus produced on the gilding and bright-coloured mosaics, the strange and fantastic accidents of light and shade among the far-retiring columns, aisles, and arches, together with the imposing pageantry of the Papal procession, moving to and from the high altar, I can in some degree imagine, but was not fortunate enough to witness.

DEPARTURE FROM ROME.



WHEN the time drew near which had been fixed for our departure, not even the thought that our steps were now to be turned homewards could altogether prevent a feeling of regret.

I do not think any one ever more intensely enjoyed Rome than I did. The deep interest of the place itself was greatly enhanced by the society of my dear cousins, upon whose affectionate kindness, during those months, I look back with unmingled pleasure.

The endeared friendship of the R——s also, as well as our pleasant intercourse with Lady M—— and her family,—from all these it was sad to sever.

Our arrangements, however, were completed, and the last evening came : it was spent at the Quattro Fontane ; dear S—— and Mr. R—— walked part of the way home with us, and then farewell was exchanged, and we parted. I may not trust myself to dwell on a parting which has proved our last. That loved one is now in a fairer land than that we have often admired together !

Once more the carriage was at the door, and, to our infinite satisfaction, its driver was our good friend Ferdinando! Some weeks previously we had met him in the street, and bade him call at Capo le Case, that we might speak with him of our arrangements for the future. He most gladly agreed to take his chance meanwhile, in Rome, of occasional employment, and so to wait in the hope of renewing his engagement with us; nor were we less pleased than he was. Poor Ferdinando! a shade passed over his gladsome face when I asked for his young wife and little infant. In the curious mixture of French and Italian he usually employed in addressing us, he replied, "Ah, madama, la povera petite e morta—et pour moi—j'aurai bien mieux voulu perdre, *sei cavalli!*" He seemed to select this as the very strongest, as it certainly was the most professional, illustration he could give of the sincerity of his grief!

Well, as I was about to say, we once more settled ourselves and our goods in the old places; each article, ourselves among the number, seeming to find naturally its accustomed corner. The first night was spent at Cività Castellana, in most uncomfortable quarters; a poor inn at best, and now greatly over-crowded. Ferdinando counselled our starting early next morning, if possible before any of the other numerous travellers were astir, with the view of securing better accommodation at our next night's resting-place. By five o'clock then we were off; and very successfully did we keep for a while our first start, the horses being fresh, and we having little luggage compared with many of our competitors on the road. Right merrily were we rattling down a long hill, when lo! in far less time than I can write the words, a collision—a crash—a tremendous jerk, and we were prostrate in a ditch at the side of the road! Not the slightest warning had we of what

was coming, nor did I distinctly comprehend what *had* come, till I found my feet protruding through a side window of the carriage, and planted in the mud! W——, who had been at the side now uppermost, contrived to keep himself from falling on me. One instant sufficed to ascertain that neither of us was hurt, the next to bethink ourselves of investigating our actual position. W—— scrambled out, and by and bye managed to extract me also; and then, what a scene of confusion we looked on! Ferdinando, striking his forehead with his hand, now frantically calling upon a whole calendar of saints to help him, and again beseeching us to tell him that we were safe and uninjured, but perfectly bewildered, and unable to tell what he should do first. W—— advised his catching the horses, which at some distance, with the two front wheels and pole attached to them, were amusing themselves with kicking each other, and trying to get free. Boxes, trunks, carpet-bags, cushions, books, &c. &c.—all, and it seemed far more than all the carriage had contained, —the arrangement of which I had prided myself upon—lay strewed in dire disorder upon the ground. Add to this, fragments of broken glass, splinters of wood, and other evidences of destruction, and we certainly beheld a scene of apparently as hopeless and helpless misfortune as, apart from serious personal injury, could well be conceived! The rain, too, began to fall, and we had not an idea where we were, or in what direction assistance should be sought. There was to be seen the luckless cause of our disaster—a huge waggon dragged by a team of stubborn mules, which had absolutely refused to turn out of the way, in spite of the somewhat tardy endeavours of their drivers. The first result of their unaccommodating obstinacy was, that our wheels were caught by the clumsy projecting axles of the waggon, and the second, what I have described.

Ferdinando was out of sight in pursuit of the horses, the mule-drivers followed him, and we were left in company with the long-eared delinquents, now quietly feeding by the road side.

Having collected as we best might the smaller articles, W—— made a seat of cloaks and cushions for me, and there I sat in a disconsolate enough plight truly! At length the welcome sound of approaching wheels was to be heard—alas for disappointed hopes!—the vehicle, which shortly made its appearance, was full; and, it is to be presumed, the inmates were unwilling to excite hopes they could not fulfil, for they passed by on the other side. Another few minutes elapsed, and again we eagerly watched the issue of a new approach—a lumbering, heavily-laden machine drew near, and on seeing the debris scattered around, the occupants thereof shouted to an apparently hard-hearted driver to stop, which he was at length reluctantly compelled to do, and two very gentlemanlike foreigners jumping out, came forward, followed by a motherly-looking Englishwoman, whose homely voice was as music to my ears. Each most kindly proffered their services, earnestly desiring to know what they could do to help us. I thankfully accepted the place in the carriage offered me by one of the gentlemen, who himself walked forward to Narni, which, as we learnt, was only three miles off, and was to have been the mid-day resting-place. W—— remained to look after the wreck of our property, and having pressed the mule-drivers into the service on their return with Ferdinando, got the broken carriage fastened to the waggon, and the trunks piled upon it; and thus, in mournful procession, moved on to Narni. As he walked, W—— had leisure to observe a fresh cause for thankfulness in our merciful preservation. A few hundred yards farther on, a steep rocky precipice,

unfenced by bank or parapet of any kind, sunk abruptly from the side of the road ; and had the accident happened there, it appeared inevitable that we should have been thrown over it.

The news of our disaster preceded us, and many friendly offers of conveying us on to Terni were made by those assembled in the public room of the inn at Narni. But ascertaining from Ferdinando that the chief damage could be repaired in twenty-four hours, and finding the rooms very clean and tolerably comfortable, we resolved to remain where we were. A quiet afternoon, and a ramble amid the singularly picturesque ravines and rocky dells which surround this romantic little town, repaid us well for the unlooked-for detention.

The remains of the magnificent bridge of Augustus is the chief attraction of Narni : it is noble even in ruin. One of the arches is still entire, and is composed of rough blocks of white marble, without cement. This bridge joined the lofty hills above the river, and was the passage of the Flaminian Way.

The carriage was made fit for use sooner than we had at all anticipated ; yet not early enough to allow of our departure till the second morning, as we were unwilling to arrive at Terni late in the day. The whole road thither is exceedingly beautiful, and the weather was delicious. Very fortunate have we been in our wanderings with respect to the season of the year. Our first journey through Italy was in the very midst of the vintage—the full ripe fruit hanging on every side in clustering profusion, and the mellow tints of autumn giving a richer beauty to every light and shade in the glowing landscape. And now we beheld the fair land in the spring-time of her loveliness, with a mantle of softest green alike on wood and meadow, while every tree and flower

seemed waking into joyous existence. And singularly sweet and lovely is that fresh young verdure, while it lasts, in a climate where the burning rays of the sun so soon cause it to fade and wither.

Amid scenes so fresh and fair, the few hours of that morning's journey fled swiftly and pleasantly by. Arrived at Terni, where we found a tolerably comfortable inn, we made arrangements for remaining over night, and, having hired a light open carriage, set off, in the agreeable anticipation of spending an afternoon at the "Cadute delle Marmore," better known as the Falls of Terni.

These falls are about five miles distant from the town; the road leading to them passes through the Valley of the Nar, and for nearly three miles is one continued ascent.

At Papigno, a small mountain hamlet, the road divides; one branch ascending the hill for about a mile and a half, to within a short distance of the place from whence the Velnio dashes over the rocky precipice; the other leading to the bottom of the fall. We adopted the plan most recommended, and chose the upper road first.

Alighting from the carriage at the top of the long ascent, we followed a little narrow pathway leading to the wooded bank, where first the river comes in sight; for until the moment of reaching this spot, though the roar of waters has long since fallen on the ear, nothing of the stream itself has yet been visible. Deep, still, and smooth, as if husbanding its energies for the coming crisis, flows on the rapid current! There is something of resistless determination in that noiseless arrowy sweep, with which those hurrying waters are speeding on to the verge of their tremendous leap—something which enhances the effect of the wild uproar in which they next appear.

A small wooden building, erected (so says the guide-book) by the orders of Napoleon, stands on a projecting piece of rock, opposite the middle of the upper fall, and from the open side of this is by far the most impressive view of it. The broad transparent sheet, yet unbroken in its fall, rushes down close before you, and, looking into the abyss which the jutting rock you stand upon literally overhangs, you see it disappearing in a vast cloud of white vapour, which heaves and rolls majestically around it.

I know not that anything in Nature carries with it such a sublime impress of resistless power as the sight and sound of a mighty mass of falling water—together with the consciousness that it has been thus dashing, sounding, ever, ever downwards, for long centuries, and will so continue, when generations yet unborn shall gaze upon its boiling eddies even as we did !

“The voice of many waters !” There is sublimity in the idea ;—and almost unconsciously, amid that scene, the words of the Psalmist suggested themselves, in which he seems to look around for what is mightiest—for what is grandest in nature, whereby to illustrate the glory and strength of Almighty power ! “The voice of the Lord is upon the waters ; the God of glory thundereth. The Lord on high is mightier than the noise of many waters.”

I know not how long we stood there : but long enough to exhaust the patience of a most garrulous personage, calling himself the *custode* of the place. The annoyance caused by the buzzing of these tiresome *custodes*, and by the innumerable beggars who lie in wait at every turn, and beset you on every hand, is really intolerable. And yet it is even more mournful than it is provoking, when the mind has been filled with the contemplation of what is great or beautiful, to have

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to turn again and witness such wretched objects of human degradation and misery as, at these very spots, so often press upon you ! I fear, however, that it was more from a longing desire to be quit of them, than from any charitable feeling, that we gave them the *bajocchi* which they craved.

Having descended the precipitous path at the side of the cataract, and seen it *en règle* from the various points of observation, we crossed the stream a little way down, and proceeded to climb a rocky eminence on the opposite side of the valley, where, from another little bower erected upon a terrace, we enjoyed a view which included the whole of the fall, and of the wooded ravine into which it dashes. Here we found guides and donkeys awaiting us, and having mounted, had a pleasant ride down the banks of the stream, through tangled groves of ilex and brushwood. My donkey was led by a pretty Italian peasant, who soon discovered my desire to possess some flowers which I had not yet met with, as well as specimens of the beautiful petrifications which are themselves almost like flowers. Most zealously did she fill her apron with both, and, as it appeared to me, quite as much from the wish to oblige, as to obtain rather more *bajocchi* than would otherwise have fallen to her share.

It was late in the evening ere we reached the village where the carriage was waiting to take us back to Terni ; and so ended an excursion which more than realized our long cherished expectation.

The next day's journey took us up the steep ascent of Monte Somma, which rises, at the highest pass, nearly four thousand feet above the level of the sea. The scenery becomes wild and stern in its character on leaving the fertile plains of Terni ; but the descent again towards the picturesque town of Spoleto, with its fine old fortress and vast aqueduct, is

rich and beautiful. We were glad to reach Spoleto early, and to spend three or four hours there. The Aqueduct *delle Torre* consists of a range of ten noble arches, and now serves as a bridge across the deep ravine which it spans. This ancient city was the "Spoletum" of the Romans, and withstood, according to Livy, the attack of Hannibal, after the battle of Thrasymentum. By the soft and glowing light of a sweet evening, we stopped to visit the little temple which stands near the Clitumnus; a stream to which the beautiful allusion in *Childe Harold* has given an interest greater perhaps than even classic lore has imparted. I know not when I have felt more refreshed, after a hot and fatiguing day, than by a draught of

. "The sweetest wave
Of the most living crystal that was e'er
The haunt of river nymph."

We could spare very little time to visit the Picture Galleries at Perugia, though, but for our detention at Narni, we had proposed to spend at least a day there. Perugia is the centre of a school of painting deservedly famed, and known as the Umbrian school. Its great master was Perugino, so called from the city of his adoption. He was the master of Raphael, and much of his soft colouring and spiritual expression may be traced, especially in the earlier and perhaps purer works of his gifted pupil.

In the Cathedral of San Lorenzo is the masterpiece of Baroccio, which, for many years, found a place amid the treasures of the Vatican. But the pictures which most pleased me here were—two by Perugino, the "Nativity," and the "Baptism of Christ;" a series of six pictures framed together in one, by Pinturicchio; a most exquisite Madonna

and Child, with two attendant angels,—one of Raphael's earliest works,—known as the *Madonna Staffa*. The last named is a small round picture, in which the Virgin is represented as reading, so that the eyes are cast down, rendering the serious and interested expression of the countenance perhaps yet more striking. The Child also is looking upon the book. It is a very lovely little picture, and differs from almost every other of the kind I have met with.

Just as the carriage was ready, I hastily ran to look at the *Arco della Via Vecchia*, also called the Arch of Augustus, though its construction and style leave no doubt that it is Etruscan, and consequently of far earlier date than the Roman inscription it bears would lead one to suppose.

Leaving Perugia, a long and steep hill requires additional horses, and is very tedious. From its summit, however, a view is to be seen which well repays the wearisome ascent. There lies the Lake of *Thrasymene*, recalling, by its name, the memorable battle fought on its banks, and rendered yet more interesting because not a doubt can be entertained as to this being the real field of battle. There are the woody hillocks amid which Hannibal concealed his horse-soldiers, and to the left the remains of an old tower, called to this day by the people around, "The Tower of Hannibal the Carthaginian." When the valley is reached, the *Gualandro* hills enclose one completely, leaving no other outlet than that by the little town of *Passignano*, near which was placed the mounted ambuscade, so well concealed, that the Roman general, when he took up his position in the little plain, suspected no danger, and was wholly unconscious that he was fast locked in the very midst of a hostile army. With thrilling interest does one take in each of these details, and while standing upon the banks of the little rivulet aptly called the

"Sanguinetto," where, it is supposed, was the chief scene of slaughter, I confess it was not the glory of conquest, the laurels of the conqueror, that excited my sympathy,—it was the wail of the dying thousands, the cry of shame and despair from those once invincible legions, hopelessly panic-stricken and entangled by Carthaginian wiles, which seemed to fill the air! Yes! it was with the conquered Roman, not with the subtle invader, my thoughts most dwelt.

I gathered some ivy that had fastened its tenacious clasp around the rough stones of a little bridge over the "stream of blood," and bore it off as a trophy from the field.

At Arezzo we remembered to look for the house in the "Sobborgo del Orto," in which Petrarch was born in 1504; but were unable to visit anything else. With all the haste we made, it was late in the evening of Saturday ere we descended into the beautiful Val d'Arno, and entered fair Florence. The "Quattro Nazioni" was highly recommended to us as a quiet, comfortable hotel, well situated, and not extravagant in charges. We went there accordingly for that night and the next day, resolving to take lodgings on Monday, for the few days' sojourn we purposed making.



FLORENCE.



THE pleasure of our stay in Florence was greatly increased by finding that, according to a plan of reunion proposed at Naples, Sir J—— O——, with his family, had arrived a few days previously. The C——s also were here, and had taken up their quarters at the “Gran’ Bretagna.”

On Sunday we heard two excellent sermons in the Protestant Church, from the resident clergyman. After evening service, we walked home with my cousins, and settled with Sir J—— to go with him and his party, the following day, to the Pitti Palace, and the other Galleries.

The first thing we did on Monday morning was to set out in quest of lodgings, and soon found rooms to suit us under the roof of a young couple lately married. Their house was newly furnished, and delicately clean: they were themselves most obliging and attentive, and we, in consequence, very comfortable. This matter arranged, we were ready to enjoy Florence and its many attractions.

So completely was each day spent in seeing Galleries, Gardens, Churches, and Museums, I scarcely had time to make the scantiest notes of what I saw. Even in my own mind, with a few exceptions, the effect of that week of sight-seeing resembled the brilliant medley of the kaleidoscope, more than anything else; and I found, in attempting to overtake too much, how greatly the enjoyment of all is diminished. In this bright though ill-arranged confusion, however, a few individual objects stand out clear and defined, and these alone I must be content to notice.

Passing the Vestibules of the *Galeria Imperial*, in the first of which are busts of the Medici family, and in the second the well-known Florentine "Boar," the corridors are reached. These are hung round with a collection of the works of the old masters of the Tuscan school; and contains also what interested me much, the busts of the Roman emperors, in an unbroken series, from Cæsar to Constantine. Here and there I found myself mistaken in assigning names to them, but generally it is not difficult, from the busts and medallions one has elsewhere seen, to recognise the characteristics of the different countenances. Of Nero, there is one as a child, with a soft, loving expression, and refined and delicate feature. Opposite, is one of the man—cold, hard, and sinister: cruelty and selfishness are written in legible characters on those lineaments. I wondered, as I looked first on one and then on the other, if ever he himself had seen that tender infantine face. Surely it might have awakened better feelings even in his dark bosom!

I stopped for a moment before the Bacchus and Faun of Michael Angelo, more, however, because of a story I remembered reading respecting it, than from particular interest in the work itself; but, in truth, I was all impatience to reach

the "Hall of Niobe," as it is called, from containing the group of Niobe and her children.

This is almost the only one of the famous productions of the chisel with which I was at first sight disappointed. I felt at once the fatal mistake which has been committed in dividing the group, and thus totally destroying its relative power and interest. The several attitudes of the members of the family are almost unmeaning as they now stand round the room, whereas, grouped together, as doubtless the artist intended them, each would have its part in the combined effect. But independently of this, there seemed to me a want of grace in many of the female figures, and too great an extravagance of attitude in the sons.

This was my first impression on entering the room, but very soon all idea of criticism was banished from my mind, as I drew near and beheld the majesty of woe—the self-forgetting intensity of that mother's anguish, in Niobe herself. I could scarce resist the idea, that this grief-stricken form, half-bending, as though to shield her youngest treasure, and with that despairing look of agony mingled with passionate entreaty, as though even yet she would sue for pity, were, in very deed, the bereaved mother—here, on this spot, and before my very eyes, thus turned into stone! The child's terror is mingled with a touching sense of protection in those arms, as if he felt that death itself could never reach him there!

In the Tribune, as in a central shrine, stands the presiding deity of the place—the matchless Venus di Medici. I wonder how many pages have been written upon this statue! If I never felt it before, assuredly I feel now, how little language is able to transmit to the mind of another the impressions which the eye has conveyed to one's own. And surely, in this

instance, if copies in the same material have failed to reproduce that inexpressible charm which distinguishes the original, we need not marvel that a mere repetition of words, such as "lovely," "exquisite," "divine," should utterly fail.

True, there is grace in every limb, and spiritual beauty in every lineament; purity and intellect, like a halo of light, irradiate her countenance; and I could almost fancy her the Eve whom Milton has described, when she was brought to Adam, as a help-meet for him "who was created in the image of God." But having said all this or even more, I still feel inclined to add, let those who would appreciate this beautiful creation see it for themselves.

The Wrestlers or Lottatori, and the Arrotino (the latter said by some to be the slave who discovered the conspiracy of the sons of Brutus), are each wonderful specimens of the fidelity with which Nature can be imitated by Art; but they are of a class which, neither in sculpture nor in painting, possess any interest for me. I soon turned, therefore, to the choice paintings which adorn the crimson-coloured drapery of this little sanctuary. The first I particularly noticed was a "Holy Family," comprising one of Raphael's lovely Madonnas, called "del Cardellino," beaming with tender admiration, as she contemplates the holy Child, who is represented caressing the infant John Baptist. A landscape background is introduced, contrary to the usual composition of these pictures, and a wreath of flowers encircles the whole. Next to this is a picture I have greatly desired to see—"The Fornarina." The same name is given to several in Rome and elsewhere, and I wished particularly to compare it with that in the Berberini Palace. She is a glorious creature certainly, yet not one of Raphael's exalted conceptions of beauty. The style of face and colouring is more like Titian than Raphael,

and conveys the impression of being a portrait rather than the realization of an *ideal* of loveliness, which so often, I think, strikes one in the female figures of the latter. But in the minute and exquisite finish of every part, the hand of Raphael is evident. The superb ornaments with which she is adorned are introduced with marvellous taste, conveying the same kind of effect, amid the rich dark hair and costly dress she wears, as the reality might have done, so subdued is their tone, even while golden gleams of light shine upon them.

After going through that most interesting gallery, where are the portraits of all those painters whose genius has left such a precious legacy of enjoyment and delight to succeeding ages, we went next to the Pitti Palace,—at once stationing ourselves before the “*Madonna Seggiola*.”

What is it that makes this so superior to almost all other representations of the Virgin ? The beauty of feature here is not greater than in many others, and there are no accessories introduced to heighten the effect,—no legend or tradition attached to the scene to carry away the imagination. I can only suppose it is the magic sweetness of expression, and perfect harmony of the colouring. It is a painting which—almost more than any other—must be seen to be fully appreciated. There are many copies of it that may fairly be considered very good pictures, and yet they are devoid of the especial charm I have spoken of, but cannot describe. The true child-like loveliness of the infant Jesus is also remarkable here ; even with that look of earnest thoughtfulness in the eyes, there is blended the sweet simplicity of childhood, especially in the rosy mouth and dimpled chin.

It is interesting to know anything connected with the origin of such a picture as this, and I believe the following

incident actually took place. Raphael was passing through the streets of a small town, when his artist eye was arrested by a group in the doorway of a lowly cottage. A young peasant woman was sitting on the step, holding one rosy child in her arms, while a second clung to her knee, and looked up into her face. He was struck with the unconscious grace and beauty of the group, and fearing to lose the impression, took out his implements to sketch it. Having nothing else at hand on which to spread his paper, the top of an old barrel which stood by was forthwith made to answer his purpose, and the circular form of that extempore drawing-table has the merit, or the fault, as it has been variously estimated, of giving the same to the painting.

The Duomo in Florence is a grand, as well as a singular edifice. The original design would appear to have been Tedescan, modified by a style which seems to have found favour with architects of that period, borrowed, as the learned suppose, from Egypt and Syria. But it was the fate of this Cathedral to fall into the hands of many builders in succession, so that it is difficult to say to what style of architecture it really belongs. Yet the general effect is solemn and imposing. The interior almost takes one by surprise—so vast, so dark, so shadowy is it. But scarce have you time to feel the solemnizing effect, ere the rich hues of the painted windows cast such gleams of radiance among the pillars and arches, that you can hardly deem it an edifice made by hands, but rather one of Nature's temples, in the deep green shade of some primeval forest, with the gold and crimson tints of a setting summer's sun streaming in broken and divided rays through the foliage. The one single effect was so pleasing, I absolutely refused to look at pictures, ornaments, or any work of art it contained.

The Campanile of Giotto is a fairy structure—simple in design, yet richly ornamented. It has been truly said to be the work of a painter as well as an architect.

The Baptistry is remarkable for three gates of bronze, of elaborate beauty, on which Michael Angelo bestowed the most extravagant praise. One was executed by Andrea Pisano, the other two by Ghiberti. The finest, I think, is the eastern—representing various striking events in Old Testament history. When the light falls on them in a particular way, no *chiaro-scuro* drawing could be finer, so perfect is the perspective, and the way in which the foreground is made to project ; nor is the fidelity to the subject, observed throughout, less worthy of admiration.

VISIT TO FIESOLE.



ONE lovely day we accompanied the C——s to Fiesole. The drive is a delightful and varied one, now passing amid villas and grassy slopes, with luxuriant creepers overhanging the walls,—now winding up the steep ascent between high banks covered with low brushwood. Wild rose, honeysuckle, and a beautiful kind of clematis, perfumed the air, and called forth incessant exclamations of delight. Among the many carriages, passing and repassing continually, we noticed a light English-built chariot, in which sat two persons ; one, an old and feeble man, supported by the arm of his companion. He was on the side nearest W——, who exclaimed, “What a look of Napoleon that old man has !” In returning we encountered the same chariot again, and being all struck with the likeness, inquired of the man who drove us who the old gentleman was ; he replied, with a look of surprise at our ignorance, that it was Lucien Bonaparte, the brother of the Emperor.

On reaching the height whereon the ancient Etruscan city

of Fiesole stood, we left the carriage and walked to see a very perfect specimen of the Cyclopean Wall, which still runs for a considerable way in an unbroken line along the northern ridge. The stones of which it is composed are of enormous size, unhewn and shapeless, yet conveying an idea of massive strength, combined with rude magnificence which, in contrast, causes the masonry of modern times to appear puny and insignificant. This portion of the ancient defences of the city is scarcely at all injured, either by time or by the hand of man ;—and after having seen the dwellings and monuments of successive centuries rise and crumble around it, still stands to this day, the unfading memorial of a primeval age.


Upon the supposed site of the fortress, or Acropolis of the old city, now stands what is in itself a venerable relic of antiquity—the Church of St. Alexander, built by Theodoric the Ostrogoth, A.D. 526.

It is from these heights of Fiesole that one of the finest views of the Val d'Arno, and of the city sheltered in its bosom, is to be seen. Surpassingly fair indeed, is “*Firenze la Bella*” from this spot. The swelling, undulating line of her guardian hills—the gentle curves and windings of the silvery Arno, with its many arched bridges—the domes and towers of the city rising amid gardens and lofty trees, together filling up the centre of the fertile plain, are elements of a scene of gay and smiling attractiveness, which is alike pleasing to the eye and gladdening to the heart !

I admire the dress of the Florentine peasants, especially the wide-brimmed Leghorn hats, by which name we know them best. They have evidently, too, an innate love of flowers, which I like to see. I often noticed a freshly-gathered wreath of bright wild flowers gracefully twined

round these most picturesque hats ; nor must I forget the pretty flower-girl, with whom I made acquaintance near the Cascine, who presented me almost daily with a tastefully arranged bouquet, till my room was scented by the sweet violets which always formed the centre of the fragrant nosegay. It is a pretty picturesque custom this, though it may not in reality be so disinterested as it at first appears.

LEAVING FLORENCE.

E were really sorry when our sojourn in this gay and pleasant city came to a close. Our nice young landlady was full of regret at our departure, and wished us many a "buon' viaggio." The Tuscan dialect, of the lower orders at least, is very peculiar, especially in the use of the *h* for the *c*, wherever the latter ought to be sounded hard. When I heard the peasants, on first entering Tuscany, offering "*un havallo*" to Ferdinando, I was puzzled to comprehend what they meant. Their voices, too, are harsher, and far less pleasing than the Roman. "*Lingua Toscano in bocca Romano*," is the common saying; and in the implied superiority of the latter, at all events, I cordially acquiesce.

On Monday, May 8th, we were early on the road, slowly winding up an ascent on the side opposite to that we had climbed in going to Fiesole, but commanding the same singularly rich and varied view. The rays of the morning sun glittered on the roofs and domes of the city, through the misty veil which still hung about the banks of the river.

Our mid-day resting-place was at a solitary post-house by the roadside, and on the outskirts of a hanging wood. Having brought a basket of provisions with us, we determined to exchange the close dirty room of the little inn for the shade of some noble oaks which towered amid the trees of the wood. Choosing one where the rugged roots provided us with seats, and the short turf with a table, we spread out the contents of the basket; and while discussing, in this primitive fashion, our *al fresco* meal, enjoyed, through openings in the wood, views of rich and fertile vales on either side. I took a sketch of one of these views, with the oak-tree clump as foreground.

Leaving the cultivated valley behind, we now entered on the dark and dreary ridges of the Apennines. The scene is wild and desolate, with none of the sublimer grandeur of the Alps, yet not without a kind of savage picturesqueness of its own. For miles and miles the road proved a succession of up hill and down hill; yet step by step ascending to higher regions, the face of the country becoming more and more barren, and the air sensibly more keen. During several hours we seemed to have the solitary road all to ourselves; but as we drew nearer to the night's quarters, we perceived, considerably in advance, dark moving specks, which proved to be travelling carriages.

Our ever-accommodating Ferdinando had agreed to push on past Covigliajo, the usual day's journey from Florence, not only because it was more likely to be crowded, but in order to reach Pietra Mala, where there is a natural phenomenon which we were anxious to visit.

The evening being fine on our arrival, we at once determined to set off in search of this, having secured the services of a boy to guide us. It was well we had done so, for the path.

was not only rugged and difficult, but by no means easy to distinguish. The distance from the village was much greater than we anticipated, so that it was getting quite dusk when we first came in sight of the "Fuoco di Legno." It is a small circular spot of ground, covered with loose stones, and not more than ten or twelve feet across. From the surface of this shoot up numberless little tongues of lambent flame, in colour and motion like blazing alcohol. It is a most singular spectacle; and though there is nothing of the grand and terrible, yet there is much of the mysterious, and almost of the supernatural, in the appearance of this fiery spot on the dark mountain's side. To the uninstructed eye, there seems no reason why those flickering flames should burn on continually in one spot—no reason why they should stop there. Doubtless the scientific would give ready reasons for both, and tell us of gases exuding from decayed vegetable matter here imbedded; but on me the impression was much more imaginative, as we stood in the *gloom* on that barren hillside, watching the elfish flames as they danced within the charmed circle! It was dark and *eerie* as we retraced our steps towards the inn of Pietra Mala, where, probably, we obtained better accommodation than we should have found in the more crowded Covigliajo.

Our road next morning still lay over a wild waste of mountains, with little variety, till we came to Filigare, where is the boundary of the Tuscan territory. The Dogana is a fine building,—far too good for its purpose, was my inward cogitation,—notwithstanding that on this occasion we met with all courtesy and civility from the officers.

The scenery now becomes more interesting, with occasional deep and wooded ravines, or rather valleys, as they are better termed. From Lojano to Pianoro, the descent is very

abrupt, requiring additional drags upon the wheels. The views here, from various points of the road, are exceedingly striking. Stretching far as the eye can reach, is a chain of distant snow-capped Alps—the Adriatic, like a streak of light, is visible on the horizon ; while spread out below are the wide and fertile plains, with an occasional gleam from the winding Savenna. On this river stands the ancient city of Bologna, the capital of the most populous and flourishing of the States of the Church.

On entering its wide and handsome streets, the first peculiarity the stranger observes is the covered archway on each side, giving not only character to its streets, but affording a most grateful shade from the heat of the sun, and doubtless also protection from the storms of winter. At the same time one would suppose they must darken the shops and lower parts of the houses very dismally, especially in the old part of the city where the colonnades are low and heavy.

We drove through two or three of the principal streets to the “Grande Albergo,” a comfortable hotel, and more conveniently placed than the others as regards the public galleries.

Thanks to the arrangements of our previous night's quarters at Pietra Mala, we were enabled to arrive soon after eleven o'clock in the morning, thus securing a long day.

BOLOGNA.



THE Bolognese School of Painting is one of the most celebrated, and boasts a constellation of the brightest genius. Passing over its earlier epochs, the period of its greatest glory began with the Caracci, in the sixteenth century, who introduced an entirely new style of painting, and were remarkable for the illustrious pupils they produced. Of these, the first and greatest was Domenichino, who has been called the second painter in the world—second only to Raphael. Scarcely inferior to him is Guido, who must be seen in Bologna to be thoroughly appreciated ; and Guercino, the pupil of Guido, who also belongs to this school.

As soon as we possibly could, our steps were directed to the Accademia delle Belle Arte : it is a noble collection, admirably arranged, consisting chiefly of the native school. The works of the various artists are placed in a great measure chronologically.

Here is almost a single instance in which I could look at a painting, where the subject is physical suffering, without dis-

gust—the “Martyrdom of St. Agnes,” by Domenichino. It is a large picture containing a vast number of figures, all admirable, yet in nothing distracting the eye from the principal one. The elevated expression which characterizes the Martyr at once rivets the attention ; while, as you look upon that calm upturned gaze, you forget the bodily suffering she has yet to endure, in the heavenly support and consolation afforded her.

Another masterpiece of this artist I find I have noted down, the “Madonna del Rosario,”—by some considered to surpass even the St. Jerome in the Vatican.

To the treasures which more properly belong to Bologna, viz., the productions of her own scholars, has been added a precious gem of Raphael’s—the Santa Cecilia. I was instantly struck with this countenance, not only with its expressive beauty, but the extraordinary likeness it bears to one most dear to me.

Different pictures, equally powerful in execution, and even beautiful in subject, certainly affect the moral sense in very different degrees. There are many to which one accords the warmest admiration, and from which one bears away the most pleasing impression ;—for instance, the several pictures in the Sciarra Gallery, and those three in the Vatican which I have described. When I actually stood before these, it was with an intense perception of their beauty—their powerful delineation, and the gorgeousness or transparent softness of their tints. But yet for all this, I seldom think of these pictures unless accident recall them ; whereas some there are which visit me in the dreamy hour of half unconscious musing, and which suggest the mental filling up of a history by the single page which they unfold. “Abraham dismissing Hagar”—“The Sibyl” in the Borghese Palace, are

instances of this ;—and now I have two more to add to these, which I saw in the Gallery of Bologna.

The first is “Samson having obtained the Victory over the Philistines,” by Guido. Grand, indeed, is the conception of the subject. A flat low plain lies spread before you, over which the dim veil of night is still resting. The horizon is already streaked with the early dawn of day, and there is enough of light to reveal the magnificent figure of Samson, who stands on a rising ground, with the bodies of his fallen foes lying at his feet—the camp of the Philistines is in the far distance. All is still—the last groan of the dying has been hushed—not a sound breaks that awful solitude ! And the mighty champion himself !—there is no trace of human passion on those pale stern features—neither of human love nor pity ! He stands there as the instrument of Almighty vengeance. Like the destroying angel who passed over the houses of the Egyptians in the midnight hour, carrying whomever the shadow of his wing rested,—so does Samson seem here, as it were, removed from earthly sympathy—the sword in the hand of Him who commanded him to smite—who gave miraculous power to the mean and insignificant weapon he had wielded, and which is yet in his grasp. There is nothing horrible in the scene depicted—no revolting spectacle of human torture. All is grand, sublime—most plainly giving this as the interpretation of the incident itself: “Vengeance is mine ; I will repay, saith the Lord.”

Very reluctantly did I turn away from the majestic painting ; yet but a few paces from it, I was arrested by another, which called forth the same sort of intense feeling, “The Massacre of the Innocents.” In all respects it is the strongest contrast to the “Samson.” Terror, agony, wild despair, are each and all here portrayed. And while my eye passed

from one form of anguish to another, I felt ready to shrink before the stern determination of those fierce and pitiless soldiers, as if in living contact with them. I hid my face in my hands after gazing on one who, by the might of her mother's love, has succeeded in shielding as yet her precious baby by her own form. Oh ! that relentless wretch ! can he—will he—take the little one even from those bleeding arms ! Again I could almost have screamed aloud, so intense and living is the wild energy which has hitherto kept at bay that cruel monster fiercely assailing a fair young creature, whose infant has as yet escaped his fury, and now lies all unconscious of its danger.

Another—one can but weep for her—calm and still—despair itself is hushed. She has nothing more to hope—nothing more to fear ! One sweet innocent lies on her lap, another at her feet ! Their sufferings are over now !

Near her is one whom despair cannot still—the shock has hurled reason from her throne—feeling, hope, memory, all are flown ! Look at the frenzy which lights up her eyes—the long tangled hair thrust back from the hot throbbing brow. I could look no more—and yet distinct and vivid, as though I still looked upon the terrible tragedy, does each form and phase of that mother's agony rise up anew. I almost would I could forget it !

Mr. Beckford calls Bologna “a city of puppy dogs and sausages.” It was probably this remark that made us curious to experiment upon the latter. Accordingly, when the waiter brought in tea, we ordered a portion of the renowned condiment. Alas for unsophisticated palates ! The smell alone was nearly enough—the first mouthful was more than enough ; and ere a second was even contemplated, we

changed our plates, and sent the vile combination of raw meat and garlic in disgrace from the room !

A brilliant moonlight evening tempted us out, wearied though we were. The deep shadows underneath the arches of the Colonnade contrasted with the strong light beyond, and we remarked how fitting a time and place it seemed for the scene of some tale of the lurking assassin, with his gleaming stiletto. Ere we returned, a distant sound of music awoke more pleasing associations, and, to our great delight, a band of performers stopped in the street, near to our hotel. When we could no longer remain out of doors, we retired to our rooms, and leaving the windows open to the soft balmy air, enjoyed till nearly midnight the sweet and soothing strains.

FERRARA.



THE country between Bologna and Ferrara is certainly remarkable for fertility, but as remarkable also for its total want of any natural beauty to interest the eye. Long straight lines of road stretch over the dead levels of the plain, with those interminable rows of the stiff Lombardy poplar on either side, tantalizing one at a distance with the promise of a shade, which, on reaching them, their meagre forms are incapable of yielding. Wide stagnant ditches run parallel with the highway for miles and miles, peopled with myriads of bull-frogs, which morning and evening industriously exert their voices in serenading the passing traveller ; producing, by dint of combined numbers, a sound which, in loudness and harshness, far exceeded what I could have supposed within the compass of such tiny lungs.

It was drawing on towards evening when we passed the ramparts, and entered the once proud and gay, but now silent and deserted streets of Ferrara. We noticed, in several of the most aristocratic-looking squares, the grass growing

luxuriantly on the untrodden pavement, while few and far between were the vehicles of any description visible. We drove to the principal inn, "Tre Mori,"—once I believe a Royal Palace. You drive under the time-worn arch of an immense gateway, into a spacious court surrounded by open corridors, off which are innumerable apartments—once doubtless elegant and noble, but now dingy, comfortless, and unclean.

As our time here was so very limited, we could do nothing but glance at the few specimens of the Ferrarese School of Painting, that still are to be found in the place ; and therefore I am unable to give even my own opinion of any of them. The Cathedral is a Gothic edifice, with an imposing exterior ; but with peculiarities of architecture which I could not by any means admire. The front is divided by small towers into three equal portions, with a circular window in each, and terminating in a pointed gable surmounted by a pinnacle. On the porch are very fine bas-reliefs, which have been beautifully preserved—representing the Last Judgment, the Life of Christ, and other sacred subjects. Over the door is a colossal statue of the Virgin in marble, long venerated as the miraculous Madonna of Ferrara.

We visited none of the other churches, but hastened on to the great object of curiosity which this ancient city contains—Tasso's prison, as it is called. A small cell in the Hospital of St. Anna is pointed out as the place of the great poet's confinement. In this miserable little cage he was immured as an alleged madman for nearly two years, after which he was removed to a larger apartment contiguous to it. As to the fact of this being the identical place of Tasso's imprisonment, different authorities have given conflicting opinions ; but popular tradition assuredly points out this as such ; and in

these cases, the stranger does wisely not to mar his own enjoyment, and lessen the interest of the spot, by being too learnedly sceptical. Byron's name is written with his own hand on the wall of the cell, and those of other literary celebrities are also there.

Another honoured name among Italy's sons of genius is also recalled with special interest in Ferrara. Near the Church of Santa Maria stands the house which was long inhabited by Ariosto, and in which he died in 1533. He came to the university for the purpose of pursuing the study of law—the profession to which he was first dedicated, but which he forsook for the more congenial atmosphere of romance and poetry. I fell in, not long ago, with a sonnet of this poet, which pleased as well as surprised me, for I was not prepared to meet with so much apparent devotional feeling. I give it in the translated form in which I noted it down.

“How shall my cold and lifeless prayer ascend,
 Father of Mercies, to Thy seat on high,
 If, while my lips for Thy deliverance call,
 My heart against that liberty contend?
 Do Thou who knowest all, Thy rescue send,
 Though every power of mine the help deny. . . .
 Eternal God, oh! pardon that I went
 Erring so long! Whence have mine eyes been smit
 With darkness, nor the good from evil known.
 To spare offenders being penitent,
 Is even ours; to drag them from the pit,
 Themselves resisting, Lord, is Thine alone.”

Ferrara was one of those places peculiarly interesting in Italy, from having given decided encouragement and impulse to the glorious work of the Reformation. Nor among those associated with its past, did we forget one whose giant mind and powerful energies were consecrated to far higher ends than those of this world's wisdom or refinement. John

Calvin found an asylum here during some months of 1535, under the protection of the Duchesse Renée, daughter of Louis XII., who was herself a convert to the Protestant faith under the instructions of the great Reformer.

Our curiosity did not induce us to cross the drawbridge, and thunder for admittance at the iron-clenched doors of the huge Castle, or ancient Ducal Palace, which, with its frowning battlements, and deep dark moat around it, stands in the midst of the town, isolated, like some stern unsympathizing tyrant, from all connexion with the community around it, save that of despotic command. In the dungeons of this gloomy fortress, and beneath the level of those dark waters which ripple around its walls, deeds of cruelty, as legends tell, have been often perpetrated.

Ferrara is a place of much interest connected with bygone ages—both in its political and intellectual history. Wealth, genius, and nobility were, during many generations, congregated there; but the glory alike of court and of commerce has departed from her. Nor were we, I confess, sorry to follow the example, and to bid adieu, the morning after our arrival, to this melancholy and lifeless city of the past.

Our route from Ferrara lay through the same monotonous level of fertile country. Monselice is a prettily situated little town—remarkable for the bold and picturesque position of its Castle upon an overhanging rock, and remarkable also for swarms of vipers which infest every bank and ruined wall in its neighbourhood.

PADUA.



AFTER another monotonous drive through level meadows and swamps intersected with canals, we arrived at Padua. Being yet early in the day, and having two or three hours to bestow upon the curiosities of the ancient and learned city, we sallied forth to make the most of them.

The environs are peculiar from the many open spaces of waste ground that occur among the irregular streets and villas which seem straggling here and there without any definite plan. This gives the appearance of a city originally designed to be of a much larger extent than it has attained to; or else of one that has been partially destroyed, and the ruins totally swept away. Beyond the houses there is a large extent of uncultivated and unenclosed land, having somewhat the appearance of English *downs*, stretching away on every side.

The city walls and fortifications are now little more than dilapidated ruins; but some few towers and gateways still remain, which show that the once proud appellation of "Padova la Forte" was not misapplied.

According to the earliest tradition, Padua owed its first origin to Antenor, who founded it when he migrated to Italy, shortly after the destruction of Troy ; and I suppose there is not much doubt that it was this same Antenor who, being canonized by the Church during the dark ages, under the cognomen of St. Anthony, became thenceforth the patron saint of the city. This incongruity, extraordinary as it seems, is the less improbable from the fact, that on the discovery, in the thirteenth century, of the supposed skeleton of Antenor contained in a sarcophagus which was dug up in laying the foundations of one of the public hospitals, the mortal remains of the ancient pagan were deposited within the sacred precincts of the Church of San Lorenzo. Though the church has been removed, the sarcophagus is still permitted to remain upon the consecrated ground.

The Cathedral is a huge and massive structure, but with little pretensions either to beauty of ornament or grandeur of design. Michael Angelo was the original architect, but as it was not finished till nearly two centuries after his death, it is probable that little of his plan was carried out.

The building which most excites one's interest, because most connected with the national character and traditions of the Paduans, is the Palazzo della Razione, erected by Pietro Cozzo in the end of the twelfth century. This immense edifice stands in the market-place, and is supported entirely upon open arches. It is surmounted by one great pyramid-like roof, the sombre colour and gigantic proportions of which render it a striking object the moment it comes in view. This roof, indeed, was long one of the wonders of the world, not only on account of certain mechanical principles employed in its formation, but from being the largest ever constructed independent of the support of pillars from the interior. Alas,

that in these days it should have to yield in this last respect to many a railway station ! We were greatly pleased with the venerable old hall which it covers. The style is a mixed Gothic, and the general effect at once quaint and imposing. The ceiling, or rather the concave of the roof, is of open rafters, the lower extremities of which reach down almost to the floor. The proportions of the hall are immense, being little short of three hundred feet in length and one hundred feet in breadth ; while being less lofty in comparison, these measurements would be guessed at even more. The windows are very small, and just afford light sufficient to cast an impressive gloom through the vast echoing chamber, and upon the strange mystical figures and devices painted upon the walls. The latter are said to have been the work of Giotto ; and though some of them are damaged and marred, not less by lame attempts to restore them than by the original cause of damage itself, yet the beauty and antique character of many are still most evident, and have been wonderfully preserved amid repeated casualties that might have occasioned their destruction. The prevailing subjects of these paintings are connected with astronomy and astrology, with personifications, in some of the compartments, of the Moral Virtues, and of the Seasons.

At the top of the hall is what is called the Monument of Livy, whom the Paduans claim as a native of their territory, having been born at Abano. Opposite to this is the sable block of stone called the *Lapis Vituperii*, on which insolvent debtors were formerly required, during a certain time, to sit exposed to public ignominy, as the condition on which they might be held as cleared.

The chief attraction to the lover of art in Padua, is a little church erected within the ancient Roman amphitheatre—as

its name bears—the Chapel of the “*Annunziata della Arena*.” It is usually, however, called “*Giotto’s Chapel*,” on account of the beautiful and elaborate frescoes with which his pencil has decorated the whole of its interior. These frescoes were the especial admiration and delight of Titian, who adopted many of them as studies and copies in the composition of his own works. The subjects are taken from the Bible, and from the apocryphal books ; and it is said that many of the scenes and ideas depicted were suggested to the artist by Dante, who lived in the same house with Giotto, while the latter was engaged in the work. We had so little time to devote to this wonderful chapel, which, in fact, it would require days to do justice to, that I am unable, even if time and space would allow, to give any detailed account of the paintings in it, though several of them struck me powerfully, even in our hasty glance at them. Over the entrance is a representation of the Last Judgment, the general idea of which seems taken from expressions in the Book of Revelation. Far removed as I always feel such subjects to be above the proper and legitimate province of the artist’s pencil, I could not but acknowledge that here the figure of our Lord, receiving and welcoming the just in their “white robes,” is very grand and solemn.

The general series of paintings on the sides of the chapel is divided into three. The first series contains scenes and incidents from the life of the Virgin—principally from ecclesiastical traditions and legends. Some, however, are very touching and beautiful, both in conception and execution. The second series contains the life of our Lord. This, in the colouring and even outline of many of the figures and groups, has been grievously injured, but in others these are quite fresh and perfect. The Resurrection of Lazarus, which forms

the ninth division, is a remarkably fine composition. The body of the entombed man, in the very act, **as it were**, of casting off the fetters of **death and awaking** into life, with the bands and **cerements** of the grave around him, the awe-struck countenances of the figures standing by, the calm majesty of the Saviour himself, to whose voice even the dull cold ear of death has thus responded, seemed to me all magnificently brought out. The third series is a continuation of scenes from the history of our Lord. Of this, that which represents the Deposition from the Cross is considered the finest composition—indeed, by some, the masterpiece of all Giotto's works. The deep affliction of the mother of Jesus, and the characteristic expression given to the countenances of the two disciples who are about to receive the body for its burial, are thought to be unrivalled, in force and faithfulness, by any of his other performances. There are other compartments underneath this series, containing subjects of a less interesting description,—allegories and symbolical figures of various kinds,—but we could not stay to examine them.

On leaving the chapel we found the hour fixed for starting so close at hand, that we had to abandon all idea of seeing any of the other churches. Hurrying back to the hotel, we ordered out the carriage, and drove down to the Railway Station, in time to catch the afternoon train to Venice; sending Ferdinando and his horses back to Padua, there to enjoy, till our return, the *dolce far' niente*, of which the latter, at all events, stood not a little in need.

VENICE.



ES! the train to Venice! What an unpoetical idea! In our impatience, however, we were little disposed to quarrel with it; and as we took our seats in a comfortable carriage, gladly anticipated our rapid advance. I was quite fascinated with one of the loveliest children I have seen, who, with her mother, was in the second division of the same carriage with us. The latter, a gentle, pleasing, lady-like Italian, seemed delighted with my admiring glances at her child, and the little one had kissed her hand to me several times, when the ingress of sundry coarse, disagreeable Italians, with their loud voices and violent gesticulations, gave me an excuse to cross to the other side of the carriage. Her sweet simplicity and perfect childlike manner were quite refreshing, after the affected and forward appearance, both in manner and dress, so usual in children abroad. The thick masses of silky black hair curled naturally, and hung down her neck; her soft, sweet, dark eyes, beaming with gladness, almost made one merry to look at,—and yet

their earnest thoughtfulness, when she ceased to smile, was not less beautiful. I was pleased with the mother also, with whom I tried to converse. We spoke of Venice—of its past history and present state ; and her whole face lighted up as she told me something of its days of pride. Alas ! how is the glory departed now ! And yet, apart from what is exciting to the imagination in these bygone days of her pomp and splendour, can one regret the overthrow of the complicated system of tyranny, injustice, and cruelty that existed in the days of the two memorable Councils ?

However, as was natural in a Venetian, she spoke with enthusiasm of their old customs and institutions, expressing most strongly her feelings with regard to the proceedings of the French, when they occupied Venice. Certainly, the impression which the whole of Italy gives of the conduct of Napoleon's army, during their campaign there, is anything but favourable. Such frequent abuse of power, such wanton destruction even of works of art, such sacrilegious despoiling of churches and galleries of their treasures and their ornaments, cannot surely on any ground be justified.

Meanwhile, thus conversing, we had rapidly advanced, and very shortly my friend asked me to take her place and look out. We were, at the moment, on a raised viaduct which conducts the railroad about two miles across the sea from the mainland,—while beyond, literally rising out from the water, rose the fair domes and minarets of the "Bride of the Adriatic." A very little time took us to the terminus,—in a few minutes more I had bid adieu to the mother and her child, and stood on the verge of one of the broad canals.

Having arranged about passports, and settled with one of the numerous boatmen who offered their services, we stepped,

for the first time, into a gondola. These graceful little vessels quite realize the romantic ideas one forms of them. The absence of all felt motion,—the swift, noiseless, gliding advance,—the luxurious seats, on which one reclines as on a sofa,—and even the dark funereal appearance—(those in ordinary use being painted black, and their awnings of the same sombre hue),—all is in keeping with the poetry and mystery associated with this strange place. The graphic pen of Rogers has done what I think is ever acceptable to the traveller on such occasions, embodied in beautiful and appropriate lines, one's own sensations on first entering the unfamiliar precincts of Venice :—

“ There is a glorious city in the sea ;
The sea is in the broad, the narrow streets,
Ebbing and flowing ; and the salt sea weed
Clings to the marble of her palaces.
No trade of men, no footsteps to and fro,
Lead to her gates : the path lies o'er the sea,
Invincible ; and from the land we went
As to a floating city,—steering in
And gliding up her streets as in a dream,
So smoothly—silently—by many a dome,
Mosque-like, and many a stately portico ;
The statues ranged along an azure sky,—
By many a pile in more than Eastern pride,
Of old the residence of merchant-kings ;
The fronts of some, though Time had shattered them,
Still glowing with the richest hues of art,
As though the wealth within them had run o'er.”

In spite of all our delight at finding ourselves in Venice, our first impressions were not enhanced by the extreme difficulty we found in getting rooms. Owing to the expected arrival of the Empress of Russia that very day, every place but the most wretched apartments seemed taken. For two

hours we glided from inn to inn, till at last we were forced to content ourselves with a back-room in the Leone Bianco, tolerably comfortable but rather dull. So far it was well, as this hotel stands on the Grand Canal, and even its back-rooms are less dark and dreary than those of others that look to the front—into one of the narrow gloomy canals which intersect the interior of the city.

As soon as we had landed our luggage, and paid the exorbitant demands of the gondolier, who, of course, took advantage of the arrival of strangers, we sent to the post-office. Alas, a sad disappointment! none of the letters expected had arrived. After the intense heat had a little abated, we walked through some of the narrow streets, or rather passages, which form the only land communication between the different parts of the town. These led us, after some wandering, to the Piazza San Marco. What a scene is that as it bursts upon the stranger! Familiar as a thousand pictures may make one with the form and position of the different buildings, nothing, I am certain, can lessen the powerful impression of the reality. The Piazza San Marco seems to recall the whole history, and to place before the eye the entire ideal, so to speak, of Venice. The Palace of her Doge, the Ducal Chapel, the mansions of her high officers of state, the prisons of her criminals—every token of national religion, national dignity, and national power—all are here concentrated and brought within one glance. The domes and cupolas of San Marco, the glittering pinnacles and golden mosaics, the vivid colours of the frescoes, the antique fretted gothic work, the splendid columns of richest marbles—green, purple, yellow, and almost transparent white, the celebrated gilt bronze horses over the central arch of the portal, constitute a vision of magic splendour quite incon-

ceivable. On the right hand rises the princely pile of the Doge's palace,—its very name calling up memories of power and magnificence. A little to the side are the two granite columns so intimately associated with the history of the Republic: the one bearing "the winged lion of St. Mark,"—~~the other~~ the statue of St. Theodore, erst patron-saint of the fair city, until St. Mark usurped the popular veneration.

Immediately in front of San Marco are the three bronze pedestals of Alessandro Leopardi, in which are inserted the masts from which once proudly waved the three gonfalons of silk and gold, signifying the three dominions of the Republic—Venice, Cyprus, and the Morea,—or, some say, their portion of Constantinople and the Eastern Empire. The mighty gonfalons have now given place to the ample folds of white and scarlet of the Austrian standards. More to the right, and farther in, towards the middle of the Piazza, is the grand, grave, old Tower of the Campanile. There is something striking in its stern simplicity of material and design, amidst the rich exuberance of ornament around. At first, it seems rather out of place, but as you look again there is that in its noble height and massive strength which is undoubtedly imposing, and makes it that fitting memorial of yet earlier ages, which in truth it is,—having stood there nearly a thousand years. At the end of the Piazza nearest the Cathedral, is the Tower of the Orologia, which completes the unrivalled group. Its great orb is resplendent with blue and gold, with a figure of the sun travelling round the zodiacal signs upon it, and marking the time of twice twelve hours. Above are two immense bronze figures which, with ponderous hammers, beat the different hours upon the great bell between them.

After walking round the Piazza, we entered the Cathedral. The gilt ground of the mosaics conveys the idea of its being lined with gold, and while the effect is exceedingly rich, yet from the absence of strong light, it is not too showy. But perhaps it is not the first time one sees the interior that it is fully appreciated. It is so totally unlike anything else in Europe, that I think one feels more inclined to wonder than to admire—admire at least to the extent one does after becoming more familiarized with its mosque-like magnificence. I find it interesting to look back on the various cathedrals I have seen; beginning with the fairy tracery work of Antwerp,—then the mingling of grandeur and magnificence at Cologne,—the imposing height and solemnity of the noble Gothic pile at Strasbourg,—the dream-like beauty of the Domo at Milan,—the palladian edifices of Pisa and Sienna, the unrivalled dome and stupendous majesty of St. Peter's,—and recalling the feelings peculiar to each, turn to this strange and unfamiliar building. No sensation of awe, such as I have often experienced, mingles with the admiration which cannot but be excited by the gorgeous splendour of the Byzantine style of architecture exhibited in St. Mark's. Vain would be the attempt to describe the endless variety of objects on which the eye falls. Trophies from many a distant shore; marble tablets bearing Syrian inscriptions, and interspersed with allegorical representations, now of Pagan mythology, and anon of Prophets and Evangelists; figures wrought in purple porphyry from Acre; Gothic work in bronze, silver, and stone, executed by the famous Venetian goldsmiths; nor must I omit to mention the Pala d'Oro, made at Constantinople, famous alike for the splendour of its decorations and its great antiquity.

We did not stay long, as we were impatient to enjoy the

delights of an evening on the Grand Canal. Choosing, on this occasion, a barchetta or open gondola, we soon found ourselves gliding into the great thoroughfare of the city. It is impossible to imagine anything of the kind more enjoyable than the noiseless rapidity with which we darted through the tiny rippling waves, while the cool fresh air from the water fanned us; our gondolier, meanwhile, pointing out each locality to which an interest was attached; this, the abode of the Doge Marino Falieri; there, the Palazzo of the Foscari, one of the mightiest families in other days; to the right, Lord Byron's Palace; farther on, to the left, the Palazzo Correr (now the post-office);—and so he went on, each few strokes of the oar bringing one to some fresh object of attraction. We spent more than three hours upon the water, and then returned to the Piazza, which at this later period of the day had assumed a peculiarly characteristic appearance. It was crowded with people walking up and down in the centre. At the sides, and in front of the arches were little tables surrounded with chairs, where groups both of ladies and gentlemen were enjoying ices and coffee. We, too, determined to be Venetians; and taking possession of one of the little tables, with its surrounding seats, we sent for those most seasonable luxuries, and then enjoyed to the full a band of military music. It was very delicious, and though only the second week in May, the air felt so soft and balmy that we remained in the Piazza till ten o'clock, and then returned to the hotel.

Next morning, at breakfast, we received, to our great joy, the expected letter from Mr. M——, telling us of his being at Venice. He joined us almost immediately after, and a happy meeting indeed it was. He lost no time in sending for his luggage, and securing a room in the Leone Bianco.

Ere long we had not only talked over our mutual adventures since we parted in Scotland, and many mutual interests and friends, but had arranged that he should accompany us on our homeward route by the Tyrol, and through Southern Germany, visiting, on our way to the Rhine, the ancient towns of Nuremberg and Wurtzburg.

About eleven o'clock we all went in a gondola to the Belle Arte. There are many fine paintings here of this far-famed school; but, as a collection, I thought it inferior to that of either Florence or Bologna.

The most celebrated picture is the Assumption of the Virgin, by Titian. The celestial light around the Virgin, and the solemn grandeur of the group of figures below, are very impressive. The colouring of the drapery around the Madonna is rich and splendid, but it too partakes of what seems to me the fault of the whole picture, a want of lightness and grace. The figure is heavy and large, and the colours want a something aerial, which is so admirably given by Raphael, in the Madonna di Foligno, and many others. Immediately opposite Titian's, is a picture very highly thought of, by Tintoretto. At first one is only struck with the horrible reality of the suspended execution,—the subject being "The Deliverance of the Venetian Slave by St. Mark, at the very moment of his execution." Altogether, it is very unpleasing, though, at the same time, the power and energy thrown into the attitudes and countenances, leave no room to question its great merit. One that satisfied me much more, however inferior as to force of painting, is by Paris Bordone, "The Old Fisherman presenting to the Doge the Ring found in the Lido." A view, by Gentile Bellini, of the Piazza San Marco in olden times, with a procession, is interesting, as showing the Piazza as it was in 1496, together with the costume of

the period in the animated figures with which the fore-ground is filled.

While we were still in the Gallery, the Princess Olga, daughter of the Emperor of Russia, a very beautiful woman, came in with her suite, passing close by us. At first, we supposed it was the Empress, and were greatly impressed with the commanding dignity of her step, and the regal grandeur of her manner.

In the early morning, Mr. M—— and I ascended to the Belfry of the Campanile. First, we mounted by a continuous inclined plane, and then by steps round an inner tower. This is open here and there, and most awful it is to look down into the dark deep well beneath; but I carefully avoided turning my eyes much in that direction, and, by keeping close to the wall, managed to get on very well. The parapet which surrounds the gallery at the top is so high that any one can look from it without a sensation of nervousness—a very great advantage to those who suffer as I do in such situations. I would not on any account have missed enjoying the view from the Campanile, since none other can give one so complete an idea of the city. The morning is a particularly favourable time to see it, as the horizontal rays bring out every part. This bird's-eye view shows one the various canals, which, like veins, intersect it; the Grand Canal being always conspicuous as the main artery. Another advantage of this position is, that it is sufficiently, yet not too much, elevated to enable one to distinguish the position of the different palaces, churches, &c. We could willingly have lingered a while, but having devoted this day to the Doge's Palace and several Galleries, were reluctantly obliged to retrace our steps.

Having found W—— at the place of rendezvous, we immediately repaired to the Cortile of the Palazzo. A beautiful

fountain occupies the centre of the court, and one is struck with the perfect harmony with which the most diversified style of ornament and architecture have been made to blend together. The Scala dei Giganti, constructed of the finest marble, leads to the Scala d'Oro, where were once the terrible lions' mouths, but of which only the apertures now remain. As it would be quite impracticable to give anything like a full account of the numberless rooms, I can only name a few which either were in themselves remarkable, or contained pictures deserving of especial notice.

In the Sala delle Quattro Porte is Titian's well-known "*La Fede*," with which, however, we were all alike disappointed. The presence-chamber which opens from this hall, and in which the Doge and his council received foreign ambassadors, is of noble dimensions, adorned with some fine national paintings of Paul Veronese. The Sala del Senato interested me greatly, from retaining much of its original character and arrangement. The tribune for the speakers—nay, even the candlesticks used when discussions were prolonged into the midnight hour—could not but bring to mind the glorious days of this once haughty Republic. These were pleasing associations, and very different from others soon after called forth, as I entered, with a shudder, the Sala dei Dieci. Here sat the dread tribunal on whose slightest word depended the lives and liberty of thousands. The very chairs are standing there at the upper end of the hall, apparently just as they were last used, the crimson morocco cushions worn and faded! I sat down on one of these, and for an instant fancied it endowed with power to tell the fearful tragedies of which it had been the unconscious witness! Oh, if that lifeless frame had language, how thrilling would be its revelations! Yet more terrible still are the associations connected with the smaller, the "Hall of

Three," which is close beside that of the "Ten." This apartment is destitute of any ornament, and with no relics of its reign of terror save the roof and floor, which are as of old. In one of its side walls, however, is the narrow passage, or throat, with which the Lion's Mouth outside communicated. The "Sala del Consiglio" is a magnificent room: Mr. M—— took its measurement,—one hundred and fifty-four feet long, and seventy-four feet wide. It is to be regretted, I think, that it has been converted into a Museum. The paintings commemorating the power and prosperity of the Republic yet remain, however, and are interesting as among the first specimens of oil-painting in which canvas was employed,—the Venetian school being the earliest to adopt it. One of these, by Tintoretto, is said to be the largest ever painted on canvas, being seventy-four feet in length. I was particularly pleased with one of Bassano's, "The Pope delivering the Consecrated Sword to the Doge." It is most interesting from the scene being the Piazza San Marco; while the perspective of the buildings, and of the groups of figures placed beneath the arches, and in various other situations, is admirable. Passing more hastily over several by Paul Veronese, Bassano, Palma, and Tintoretto, I was particularly arrested by the subject of one, by Palma, "The Siege and Conquest of Constantinople by the Crusaders," led on by the venerable Dandolo. Can one look on this animated picture, and not think of the yet more powerful portrait drawn by the pen of Rogers:—

"In that temple porch,
Old as he was, and in his hundredth year,
And blind—his eyes put out—did Dandolo
Stand forth, displaying on his crown the cross.
There did he stand erect—invincible;
Though wan his cheeks, and wet with many tears,
For in his prayers he had been weeping much;

And now the pilgrims and the people wept
With admiration,—saying in their hearts,
'Surely those aged limbs have need of rest!''

On leaving the Doge's Palace, we agreed to proceed next to the Churches of San Giovanni and Paolo, and Santa Maria della Salute, partly for the sake of obtaining the refreshment of a quiet half hour in a gondola on our way thither. San Giovanni is in the peculiar Veneto-Gothic style, differing greatly in its solemn grandeur from the exuberance of ornament in the Cathedral. Its effect is heightened by the brilliancy of the painted windows, which I rejoiced to see once more, and which are very rare in Venice. The monuments to the Doges, who are buried in this church, are very numerous, but any description would be tedious.

Before returning, Mr. M—— accompanied me to the Manfrini Palace, famed for its collection of pictures. There I saw, among others, a very lovely Carlo Dolce, and two Titians, of which Lord Byron speaks enthusiastically; one an Ariosto, which it is scarcely possible to over-estimate; the other is the Queen of Cyprus. The rare beauty of the ornaments she wears almost eclipses her own; though her eyes, as well as the expression of her face, are very lovely.

Perhaps we were hardly able to do justice to this gallery, as in truth I was utterly worn out with bodily fatigue. An evening spent in a gondola, after the refreshment of ices and coffee, recruited me more than anything else could have done, and prepared me for enjoying with renewed zest a most animated scene next day—a regatta on the Grand Canal.

Singularly fortunate were we in witnessing a spectacle so characteristic of Venice in her palmy days. It was to the presence of the Empress of Russia we owed this gratification. Of the actual trial of speed between the competing gondolas

I can say nothing, as I did not witness it ; but the subsequent corso upon the Grand Canal was delightful. Crowds of gondolas gliding here and there, many of them gorgeously decorated ; gay barchettas, some with bands of music on board. The gondoliers clad in the ancient costumes of their picturesque craft—some in black velvet jackets, with slashed sleeves, and white feathers in their caps ; others in a dress of pale blue and silver ; and again a crew gleaming in all the splendour of golden coloured satin. As now and then the livery of some noble Venetian House was recognised, the names of “Foscari,” “Manfrini,” or others, would echo through the crowd, who welcomed their favourite gondolas with loud huzzas. After a while the royal party was recognised amid the throng. The Empress was in a barque highly ornamented, and lined with white and gold ; while that of the beautiful Princess Olga was adorned with blue and silver ; in harmony, we thought, with her fair and delicate complexion. We passed both the imperial ladies several times ; indeed, in the pressure of the crowd, immediately below the Rialto, we were at one moment in some little danger from the gondola of the Empress. With the formidable serrated plate of steel, which forms the invariable ornament on the bows of these vessels, it struck against ours with some force, but fortunately so near the stern as only to cause a little alarm. The Empress looked rather frightened, and expressed her hope that no injury had been done, bowing with much graciousness to us, as W—— and Mr. M—— stood up, with their hats off, to acknowledge her courtesy. Among her suite I saw Prince F——, but could only exchange a smile and bow of recognition, so dense was the crowd.

Only one evening more now remained to us ; and what an

evening it was ! realizing, nay, surpassing, all our dreams of the enchantment of Venice ! First, the radiant hues of as bright a sunset as ever lighted even an Italian sky, cast a glow of golden beauty far and wide over sea and city. A few minutes later, the tallest towers and domes alone caught, as it were, the parting ray, and shone like burnished gold ; and just as we entered on the Lagunes, its farewell tint of crimson lingered, ere it faded into that short twilight which delays but briefly the reign of night's gentle queen. Dark and still, indeed, seemed those waters around us, beneath that cold grey twilight, and gloomy the vast buildings that seemed to float upon their leaden surface ! Yet it did but enhance the loveliness of the glorious flood of moonlight that followed. Speedily, beneath that magic touch, all looked more fair than ever. Perhaps the mellow light dealt more tenderly with the fallen glory of the Adriatic bride, casting a friendly shade o'er Time's rude havoc ! Perhaps the soft melancholy of the hour suited the ruin and decay of her once gorgeous beauty,—or was it that its witching effects were in ourselves alone ? I know not—but few were the words we spoke. The spell of the hour was upon us, and even a whisper seemed too harsh a sound ; something there was in that evening scene and all its accompaniments, that seemed not to belong to real life—that refused to blend with ruder and more commonplace associations !

Strange, indeed, was the transition from the stillness of those moonlit waters, to a brilliant illumination in the Piazza San Marco ! Yet not less calculated was the scene there to awaken imagination's most vivid play, as those gorgeous edifices shone forth beneath the light of many thousand lamps, in colours as varied as the mosaic tints they shone upon. Every part of those vast buildings, every arch, every



window, was marked with lines of coloured light ; brilliant meteors flashed in the sky, and devices of every kind in fireworks, shed a dazzling radiance around. To this illumination, in honour of the Empress, was added the most inspiring music, from bands placed in different parts of the square ; and in the enjoyment of their delicious strains, and of the beautiful and gorgeous spectacle around, quickly passed away our last evening in fair Venice.

THE END.



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